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More LEAVES from the INN of the LAST HOME

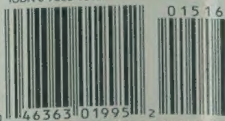
Inside this volume you will find articles on many subjects, including:

- Qué-Shu divination practices
- Lord Gunthar's Last Will and Testament
- Fashions of Krynn
- And as always, music, recipes, kender sayings, and much more.



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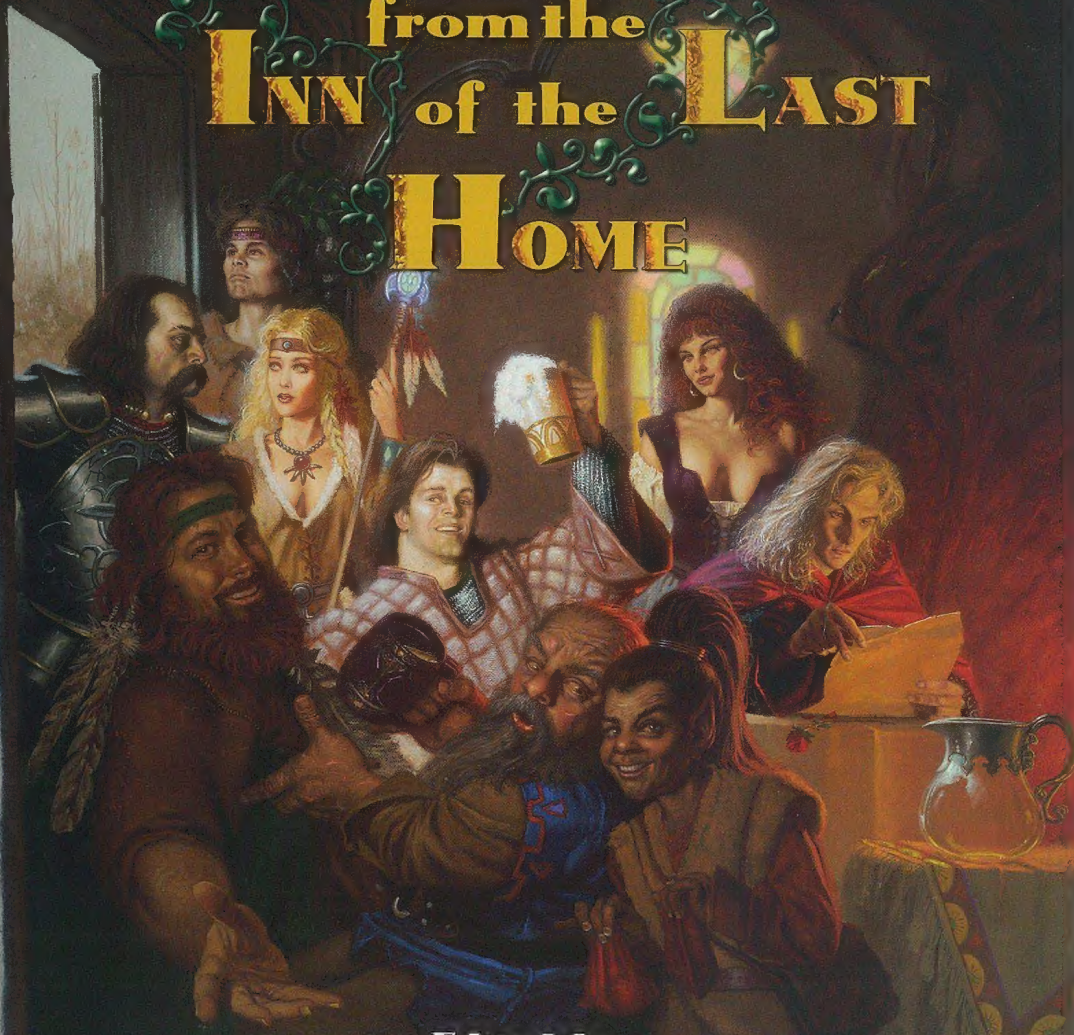
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Edited by
Margaret Weis & Hickman



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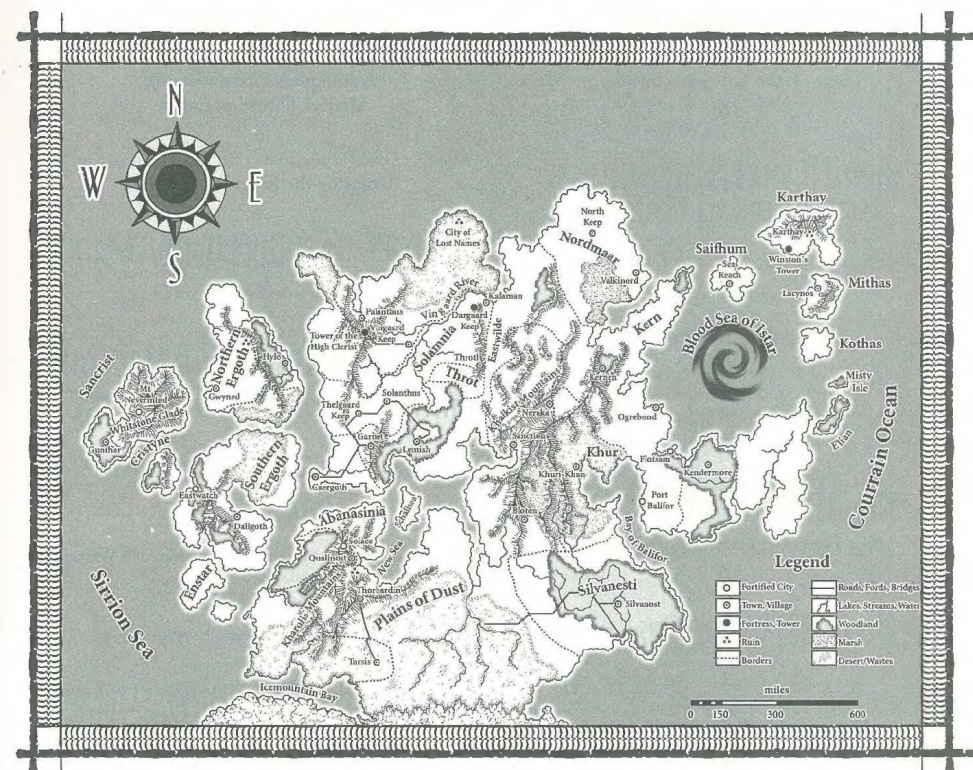
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STAR OF THE TIME AND TURNING

BY QUIVALIN SOTH

The light of that star
is centuries old,
passing through voids
and vacuums to reach us,
and yet to the eye
it is here and now,
as a story's past tense
translates into imminent dreaming.

As the night sky descends,
its influence rising,
those of us waiting
in darkened country
are floating where memory
doubles as dream
and dream blends with waking
until all the tenses
past present and future
collide in mysterious sentences:

One generation
gives way to another—
so say philosophers
calendars seasons
sedimentary rock
and the waning eye:
but against them stands poetry
vision and heart
the wild incandescence
each of us feels
as the present converges
and renames the past
and promises everything
even when nothing
seems our destination,
even when stories
reach an inevitable end.

One generation
gives way to another—
a bleak genealogy
fashioned of soil and bone,
and all of our worlds,
both perceived and invented,
trail into chronicle
diminish to legend
in new generations
when you take wife or husband
when the children you scarcely imagine
come to you, bearing
this book or another.

And then, in the fading
recesses of starlight,
in the earliest pages
of this and all stories,
you will open the book
with those mythical children,
and in showing them country
you traveled one lost
inexpressible spring,
you will find an old sky
of stars half-remembered,
new light will appear
and old lights transfigured,

And providing that all of us
did the task well—
since the first star's inception
since the pen and the compass
since the first of your memories
anchored the past to the present—
all of us then
will repeople the heavens,
what is past what is present
will align in a prospect
of new constellations
and that star, both the same
and forever transformed
has been shining is shining
and will have been shining
eternally here and now.

KENDER TAUNTS

The taunt is a traditional kender tactic that originated as a method of driving enemies into a berserk rage, clouding their thinking and making them less dangerous. All kender possess this skill to some degree and use it to gain an advantage in combat or for amusement. Kender taunts tend to be masterpieces of ingenuity and creativity, although some can be thoroughly crude, disgusting, and degrading. To be fully effective, taunts must be delivered with an air of charming innocence.

Kender have uttered the following taunts to a wide variety of subjects:

"Wow! You smell so rotten a gully dwarf wouldn't give you a bath!"

"Is that your nose or a lock? You sure seem to be picking it!"

"Your parents must have made the gods pretty angry to get a face like that!"

"I've always wondered what a half-goblin looked like!"

"Your face looks like a gnome's best site for universal solvents."

"Is your bottle that smell you could sell it to gully dwarves as perfume."

"I didn't think gully dwarves and draconians could mate, but I guess you showed me."

RACE- OR PROFESSION-SPECIFIC KENDER TAUNTS

Kender also have several taunts that they can direct at a specific race or profession. These types of taunts can pick a specific trait that is common among all members of the race or profession (such as a centaur's mane or a Dark Knight's armor) or they can simply insult the recipient of the taunt by choosing a subject hated by him or her.

To Dwarves

"The larger the beard, the smaller the brain."

"I've seen better beards on mountain goats!"

To Elves

"You know—you look like a tall kender."

To Minotaurs

"Wait, I can speak their tongue . . .
moooo!!!"

"Hey look, a walking coat rack."

To Knights

"Gee, did you inherit that mustache from your mother?" (This one works better with Solamnic Knights.)

To Wizards

"You call yourself a wizard? You couldn't even cast a fishing line!"



Friends and fellow citizens of Solace! Guests and visitors from throughout the land of Ansalon! It is indeed a great honor to welcome all of you here today on this most special occasion, the dedication of this magnificent Tomb of the Last Heroes. Today we shall honor the sacrifices they made to preserve us during the war against the forces of Chaos. Here we shall . . .

—Stop digging your hand in my pocket! Blast it all, it's a kender. How did you get here, you little sneak thief?

—I'm not a thief! I've never stolen anything in my life. I was just looking around and found this tobacco pouch. Do you know who it belongs to? It's very nice, and I'll bet whoever dropped it . . . oh, it's yours? Well, aren't you going to say thank you to me for keeping an eye on it?

—Stay away from me. Constable! Constable!



—Why are you yelling, sir?

—There's a kender . . . blast it, he's gone now.

—There are kender all over, sir. There's nothing we can do about it. They just started showing up here. Be careful, and you shouldn't have anything to worry about. You don't keep anything valuable in your pockets, do you?

—Mommy, who's the man up there on the platform speaking?

—Hush, dear. That's the mayor.

—Mayor of what?

—Of Solace, dear.

—Oh. He's very fat, isn't he?

—Shush. That's a very rude thing to say about someone. Where's your brother? Did he run off again?

—There he is, over there by that fence.

—Oh, my good heavens! He's climbing up the steps of the tomb! Jaeril! Jaeril! You come back here this instant!

—Aww, mom, I just wanted to look inside.

—Well, don't. This is a very solemn occasion, and there's no time or place for any of your pranks. You just stand here next to me where I can keep an eye on you, and listen to the mayor's speech.

—Mom, who are those funny little men over there?

—Where? Oh, good heavens, don't call them funny little men. Those are dwarves.

—Real dwarves? I never saw one before. Do they all have those long beards?

—Of course they do. All dwarves have beards. But these are dressed a bit better than any I've ever seen. I think they must be some sort of official representatives of the dwarven kingdom of Thorbardin. Now just be quiet so we can hear what the mayor's saying.

— . . . Here we shall honor not only the Knights of Solamnia, who fought to preserve the values represented in the Oath and the Measure, but also the Knights of Takhisis, who fought bravely in the Battle of the Abyss.

—No! No honor to the Dark Knights! Weren't they our sworn enemies? Didn't they invade Ansalon this past summer? Why should we honor them?

—Nonsense, Drelieff. They may have served the Dark Queen, but when Chaos came, they joined with the Solamnic Knights and fought just as bravely. Why I remember one day during the war . . .

—They're Dark Knights! They were the ones who brought disaster on us. They don't deserve any honor from us. No honor to the Dark Knights!

—What about Brightblade? Steel Brightblade?

—What about him?

—Well, he fought the dragons in the Abyss, and he died. If he hadn't, maybe you wouldn't be standing here today.

—I'm not saying some of them weren't brave. But why should we honor them? They're the one's who started the war.

—Listen. The mayor's still talking.

— . . . As a measure of our unity, the tomb itself, which you see completed before you, has been constructed from materials brought from all parts of Ansalon and given by representatives of the free people of Krynn. The white marble from which the walls of the tomb are built was delved by the dwarves of Thorbardin . . .

—Three cheers for the dwarves!

—Hurrah for the memory of Flint Forgefire, Hero of the Lance!

—Mommy, did those dwarves really come all the way from Thorbardin? That's an awfully long way away, isn't it?

—Yes, it is. But they've come to honor those who fought in the war and those who died, just like the rest of us. Don't point and stare. It's rude.

— . . . Mounted upon the white marble of the wall, which signifies the purity of the cause of those who fought against Chaos and also is symbolic of Solinari, the white moon . . .

—Aye, and where is Solinari now? Now the gods have abandoned us. Who'll protect us if Chaos should come again?

—Oh, don't whine, Scabrious! If we're threatened by enemies, we'll just have to rely on ourselves. We did it before, and we can do it again. This is our time, not the time of the gods. It's up to us to be the guardians of Krynn now and not go running to the gods all the time.

— . . . are black obsidian plaques, also fashioned by the dwarves of Thorbardin. The black symbolizes the dark moon Nuitari, and the black and white together represents the unity of Solamnic and Dark Knights, an alliance that saved us at a crucial moment during the war.

—That's right, and there wouldn't have been a war if the Dark Knights hadn't invaded Ansalon . . .

—Shut up! We're here to honor people, not to denounce them.

—All I'm saying is . . . hey, where's my sword?

—Oh, is this yours?

—There's that kender again! Damn you, stay away from me.

—I really don't see why you're so unfriendly. After all, we kender have every right to be here too. The tomb is just as much to honor a kender as it is to honor humans and elves.

—Just stay away from me! That's all I say. Just stay away.

—Pay no attention to the kender, Carolus. Listen to the mayor.

—...The plaques bear the names of all those knights, both of the Solamnic order and of the Knights of Takthis, who fell during the battle in the Abyss. A dozen Knights who died in that battle are buried beneath the tomb. They stand for all the brave men and women who died during the war fighting to preserve our homeland. Around the top of the tomb, as you can see, is carved a frieze—carved by the finest artisans, both dwarf and elf, in all the land. The frieze depicts the story of the Chaos War, from the time the giant Chaos was released to the moment it was again imprisoned by Usha Majere, hero of the war, with the aid of the kender Tasslehoff Burrfoot. The pictures on this frieze will remind us in years to come of the events of the war, and they will tell this story of heroism and bravery to future generations. Within the tomb itself are two biers. The first is of obsidian and has been designed and constructed by the Dark Knights. To describe it to you and speak of its meaning, I present Commander Honan Daviolus, leader of

the Fourth Talon of the Second Dragonarmy, himself a veteran of the battle in the Abyss.

—Three cheers for the Dark Knights!

—Hurrah!

—I'll never cheer for those sons of . . .

—I bear greetings to this assembly from Mirielle Abrena, Dark Knight Governor-General and head of my order. We Knights of Neraka join with you today to honor those who fell bravely in defense of our world . . . a world that belongs to all of us.

—If it belongs to everybody, why did you try to take it away from us?

—Quiet!

—Within this Tomb of the Last Heroes, we have laid to rest one of our own, a representative of the best of our order, one who bravely defended his own beliefs, and who redeemed his honor with his death: Steel Brightblade, son of the Highlord Kitiara uth Matar.

—And son of Sturm Brightblade. Don't forget that!

—Really?

—Yes. His father and mother never reconciled, but he was the best of both of them, so I've heard.

—To honor Steel and to commemorate his sacrifice for all the people of Ansalon, we Knights have constructed from obsidian a bier gleaming with gold. Above is carved an urn bearing a lily, symbol of our order, and along the sides of the tomb are carved Steel's name and the honors and titles that have been bestowed him in death by the order.

—I've seen the bier. In fact I helped move it into the tomb when the Knights of Neraka brought it here. A bit gaudy, if you ask me, but very beautiful . . . not to

mention, heavy.

—Hmph! Still don't think we ought to be honoring Dark Knights! Next thing you know, we'll be putting up monuments to kender.

—What about kender?

—The gods save us, he's here again! Get away from me, you little pest.

—Don't call me a pest. I'm not a pest at all. I'm the ambassador of the kender people from Kendermore. At least I think I am. We had a meeting to decide who should represent the kender, and I'm pretty sure I was chosen, though there might have been someone else, because I wasn't paying attention at that point because I had just found this really interesting spoon. . . .

—All right, for the sake of the gods, shut up! If you're the ambassador, why aren't you up on the platform with the other speakers?

—Well, I was, but it was boring up there and there are so many people down here who are more interesting. Like that fellow over there in the fancy armor.

—Him? That's a Knight of Neraka. Can't you see the lily and skull on his breastplate?

—Really? You know, I've never met a Knight of Neraka. I wonder if he'd let me look at his sword. It looks awfully big.

—He'd probably skewer you with it if you came anywhere close to him.

—Do you know him? If he's a friend of yours you could introduce me. I'm sure he'd be interested to talk to me, since I've been to so many places and seen so many places and people.

—No, I don't know him. And I don't want to. I had enough trouble here in Solace when the Dark Knights

invaded Ansalon. I'm not about to court any more. Now will you be quite so I can hear what's going on?

—Of course. But remember you were talking about monuments to kender. As a matter of fact, we have a lot of monuments to great heroes in Kendermore. There's a great big one to my Uncle Trapspringer, who fought a dragon all by himself and was torn to pieces and roasted to charcoal by the dragon. Then there was the time Uncle Trapspringer fought an ogre . . . have you ever seen an ogre? I'd like to, but I never have . . .

—Well, come with me, you little beast, and I'll be happy to find some and introduce you to them.

—Would you really? That'd be awfully nice of you. D'you suppose Tasslehoff Burrfoot ever met any ogres on his travels? I don't know if he did, but I expect so because he met just about everyone and everything until he met Chaos, which must have been terribly exciting. My Uncle Trapspringer once met a giant, but I don't think it was Chaos. I just found this necklace. Did you ever see anything so pretty?

—That's my necklace, kender. Given me by my husband on our anniversary!

—Really? Well, it's a good thing I found it then. It was lying on the ground over there, or maybe it was hanging on the tree branch here . . .

—Give it back!

—You're very welcome. If I find anything else of yours lying around, I'll let you know. Who's that talking? Is that a Dark Knight? I've never seen one before. That's a really interesting sword he has. I wonder if he'd mind if I went over and looked at it a bit more closely.

— . . . Steel Brightblade made the supreme sacrifice that all of us might live. We Knights honor him and his Vision today and join you in the dedication of this tomb.

—Thank you, Commander Daviolus. And now I

should like to invite to the platform one who will speak to us about the other bier in the tomb. I present to you an elf who accompanied the Heroes of the Lance on their journeys and shared in their adventures. His name is doubtless known to many of you. Here is Gilthanas.

—No, no! Not him! We won't have him speak! He does not represent the elves! No platform for Gilthanas!

—Mommy, who's shouting?

—Some elves, I think. I can't see very well. There are too many people in the way. Yes, it's elves. They don't want to listen to Gilthanas. See, he's not speaking yet. He's hesitating.

—Why don't they want him to speak?

—Some argument between the elves, dear. They're always arguing among themselves. Sometimes I think they do it just because they enjoy it. Many of the Silvanesti don't approve of Gilthanas, and I suppose they don't want him speaking on behalf of the elves.

—Did the elves help build the tomb, Mommy?

—Yes, dear. They brought all these wonderful trees you see planted about. And they helped carve the frieze on top of the tomb.

—What's a frieze?

—Hi, there. Are you elves from Silvanesti? I've never been to Silvanesti, but I've been to Qualinesti, though that was a long time ago . . . at least a month.

—Begone, kender! We have no interest in speaking to one of your race.

—Now, that's not nice. Why would you say that? Those are very nice robes you're wearing. You know, I knew you were important elves as soon as I saw you

because you had your noses so high up I thought you were looking at the clouds. All the elves I've met have always been proud. Why is that? I mean, I'm proud to be a kender and all that but I don't stick my nose up in the air, though maybe it's more comfortable that way, and you get to look at the sky a lot . . .

—Begone, I tell you! And drop that dagger or I'll put a sword through your wretched heart!

—Oh, is this your dagger. It's very pretty. I found it on the ground, and I was just keeping it safe until I could look at it to see if the owner had put his name on it and then I could return it. But if it's yours . . .

—Silence! And you, mayor of Solace, we will not tolerate a speech by the traitor Gilthanas. He does not speak for the elves. He speaks for no one. Let him depart.

—Friends, friends! Please, I beg you. Let us not sacrifice the unity we achieved during the Chaos War and sink back into the divisions that allowed this calamity to come upon us in the first place. Who knows when we may have to unite all Ansalon against some new enemy? Please, for the sake of unity, hear Gilthanas!

—No! We won't have it! He shan't speak for the elves!

—My friends . . .

—Sit down and shut up, you traitor! We won't listen to you! We won't allow you to speak!

—Well, that's that. He's turning away. Too bad. He might have had a lot to say.

—That's elves for you . . . always fighting, always bickering. We have a saying where I come from: as mixed up as elven politics. Here's the mayor again. Wonder what he'll do to salvage things.

—My friends and neighbors, this pains me more than you know. I had hoped this tomb would be a sign of

unity and not division. Gilthanas, for the sake of harmony, has declined to speak. But we have another speaker, one to whom I'm sure no one will object. Please join me in welcoming one who knew Tanis Half-Elven best: his companion, his friend, his true love, the Golden General, Laurana.

—Three cheers for the Hero of the Lance!

—Hurrah for the Golden General, who saved Palanthas.

—Hip, hip, hurrah!

—So that's Laurana. She's much shorter than I thought she'd be.

—Still beautiful, though. Tanis was a lucky man.

—How old is she?

—I don't think it's polite to ask questions about a lady's age. But I think she's probably pretty old. Remember elves don't age the same way humans do . . . or so I've heard.

—Listen to what she's saying.

—My friends . . . all my friends, from all the races and nations of Ansalon. This is a sad moment for me. I must say goodbye to the best friend I ever had. Tanis Half-Elven was more than our leader in the War of the Lance and in the battle against Chaos. He was everything we wanted to be: wise, brave, kind. In himself he united two peoples who have been at odds for much of the history of Ansalon: humans and elves. By his leadership he united my companions and I: a dwarf, a kender, elves, humans . . . All of us looked to him in moments of crisis. I looked to him for more, for love. Tanis had a great capacity for love. With him I found more happiness than I have ever known. But even though he is gone from me, I will not say he is dead. In my heart—in all our hearts—his memory lives, and as long as that is true, as long as just one

person on all Krynn remembers him as he was, he is not dead. Now we lay him to rest in a bier of white marble. It is simple . . . Tanis would have wanted it that way. There is nothing carved on the bier except on the very top is his name. I think Tanis would be very happy knowing that is his last place of rest.

—Aye, that he would! Tanis Half-Elven was a brave man, all right. But he'd turn over in his grave if he knew we were honoring Dark Knights as well.

—Oh, leave it alone! Just listen.

—Tanis would also be honored to lie next to Steel Brightblade. Steel behaved with honor. He, too, made the supreme sacrifice. Together I hope he and Tanis, by their deaths, have brought about a new world and a new age. I honor both of them equally. My friends, let this be Tanis's legacy: that all the peoples of Ansalon be as one. Let there be no division between us. For as he united us Companions in life, let his memory unite all Ansalon in peace and contentment.

—Hurrah for Laurana!

—Hooray!

—Friends and neighbors, there is one final speaker. Many of you know him already, and may I say I'm proud to acknowledge him as a citizen of Solace. I present to you the hero of the Lance, Caramon Majere.

—Caramon! Caramon! Good old Caramon!

—So that's Caramon Majere. Never seen him before. Funny, he doesn't look like a legend. Too fat, for one thing.

—He's not fat. He's just big-boned. You didn't see him after the War of the Lance when he put on sixty or seventy pounds and was drinking a quart of dwarven spirits every morning and every evening. Then he disappeared for a time, and when he came back he was much better.

—Speaking of dwarven spirits, after this suppose we go to the Inn of the Last Home and get a drink.

—Fine with me. I'm getting damned hot standing here. Hope he's brief.

—He will be. Caramon never was much good at talking.

—What about that brother of his?

—Raistlin? Don't say that name aloud around here. It's practically a curse word to some people.

—Has he ever been seen since he disappeared those years ago?

—There were rumors . . . rumors during the Chaos War that some in Solace had spotted a man with golden skin and eyes like hourglasses. But I don't know. There were many rumors around here during the war. Some even said they had seen Lord Soth, but I don't believe that anymore than I believe Raistlin came back to Krynn. I think he went someplace years ago, someplace terrible, and he'll never come back.

—Well, if he did come back, no matter what he'd done I'm sure Caramon would welcome him with open arms. He was devoted to his brother.

—Thank you, Mr. Mayor. It's great to, uh, to see all of you. Uh, I'm not much good at making speeches, not like some people I've known, but I wanted to tell you about my good friend Tasslehoff Burrfoot.

—Tasslehoff! He's going to talk about Tasslehoff. That's great! Tasslehoff was a great hero. Did you know he ended the Chaos War all by himself when he stabbed Chaos in the toe and then Chaos stepped on him, but it's funny that they never found his body even though you'd think he would have been squashed like a grape, not that I've ever squashed a grape before because they don't taste as good when they're squashed, at least the kind we get in Kendermore . . .

—Will you be quiet, you damned kender! How can

anyone hear over all that racket?

—Tasslehoff was a good friend and an honorable companion. He loved adventure and I'll bet wherever he is he's having the best adventure he's ever known. I, uh, I wish I could tell you all the scrapes he got into and all the trouble he got his friends out of, but there probably isn't time. So I just want to say, er, that Tas was a good friend to me and I'm going to miss him. Thanks for listening, everybody. Oh, and by the way, I almost forgot to tell you, to commemorate Tas, we've buried his pouches in the tomb, and I guess they'll lie there until the world ends. That's all.

—Three cheers for Tasslehoff Burrfoot, Hero of the Lance.

—A kender, Hero of the Lance! Amazing. That I should see the day when the people of Solace cheer a kender.

—What are they doing now, Mommy?

—Let me hold you up so you can see, son.

—Okay, I see now, Caramon and Laurana and the mayor are leaving the platform and going to the tomb. What do you think they're going to do?

—Watch, son. And remember this day all your life. You'll not see another like it.

—I see. That commander from the Knights of Neraka has joined them. His armor is very dark. Now he and Caramon have each taken hold of one of the doors to the tomb. They're shutting them. And now the mayor has locked the doors.

—Yes. There are two keys and he's given one to Laurana and the other to Commander Daviolus. The doors can't be unlocked without both keys. That's what I heard, anyway. So Tanis and Steel are joined in death.

—Hello! Excuse me, everybody!

—What's that kender doing up on the platform?

—He's shouting about something. Now the guards are going to remove him. Wait, no they've stopped. I see. Caramon told them to stop. I wonder why.

—Friends, I want to talk for just a minute. This is the first time I've ever given a speech and it's kind of interesting. I like being up here on the platform, too. You can see pretty far from here. Did you know I can see almost all the way to Solace. Of course we aren't very far out of town, but . . .

—Say what you've got to say, kender, and get down from the platform!

—Oh, all right, all right. Don't rush me. What I wanted to say was that Tasslehoff Burrfoot's being honored in a very special way by this tomb too. Look at the spot just over the doorway.

—Well I'll be . . .

—Was that there before?

—What is it?

—It's a . . . what'd you call it? . . . a hoopak. A weapon kender carry. And look what it says just above it.

—Tasslehoff Burrfoot.

—Uncle Tas. It's a monument to Uncle Tas!

—Who said that?

—There, by the stairs to the tomb. Look.

—Oh, by the gods, it's a whole family of kender. A dozen of them. Martha, quick. Run home and lock up the silverware.

—Don't be silly. They aren't going anywhere. They look as if they're having a picnic.

—A picnic! On the stairs of the Tomb of the Last Heroes? It's sacrilegious.

—Quiet. The kender on the platform's still talking.

—I don't think today is a sad occasion. Tas wasn't ever sad . . . only when his friend Flint died. He always wanted to explore new places and meet new people and now I guess he's still doing that. I wonder what it would be like to be dead. Probably very exciting. Not that I want to die just yet, because I haven't seen everything there is to see in this world, but I'm sure Tas is having a very good time in the next world, wherever that is. So what I'm saying is we should celebrate and not be sad because of Tanis or Tasslehoff or Steel or anybody who died in the war. This is a great tomb. In fact, I like it so much I'm going to come every year from Kendermore to see it, and I'll encourage everyone I know to do the same thing. So don't worry about business in Solace, because every year about this time you'll have lots of kender in town visiting the tomb.

—Oh, gods!

—Someone tell me this isn't happening. This is worse than the Chaos War.

—Well, that's all I wanted to say. Three cheers for Steel Brightblade, Tanis Half-Elven, and Tasslehoff Burrfoot. And I'll see you all next year!

—Come on! Back to the Inn for a drink and some of Orik's potatoes. After that last bit of news, I need a drink!



Years after the Chaos War, while the people of Krynn were still struggling to rebuild their lives, a new threat arose—dragons of the likes the world had never seen. They were massive wyrms from a place too distant for mortals to comprehend, and they found Ansalon very much to their liking. More powerful than nearly all of the Krynn-born dragons, they were able to reshape great swaths of land to fit their moods, and they could command impressive enchantments in a magic-starved world.

Malystyx the Red was the first to lay claim to Ansalon. She was followed by others: Khellendros, a massive Blue and the only overlord native to Krynn; Beryllinthranox, a foul-tempered Green; Gellidus the White; and Onysablet the Black. They began to dominate Krynn's humans and other races, using them as food and as pawns.

And the immense dragons bred terror wherever they flew.



GELLIDUS THE WHITE

Called Frost by men, the great wyrm stretches more than two hundred feet from nose to tail tip and has a wingspan a third again that wide. His massive head is ringed by a scaly fringe. It sweeps gracefully back from wicked-looking jowls and is shot through by tapering spikes that look as deceptively fragile as icicles. The dragon's legs are short for his long body, giving him a serpentine appearance; his feet end in spadelike claws that enable him to dig through thick ice and frozen earth. The end of his tail is flattened, like an eel's, to aid in propelling him through the water and across the ice-slick landscape. Viewed altogether, Gellidus resembles a glacier, with snow-white scales highlighted by glimmering silver and blue streaks, and green eyes covered by a frosty sheen. A formidable foe, he can slay with a swipe of his claw or with a blast of his frigid, ice-filled breath.

The great wyrm believes he was lured to Ansalon by instinct, the journey taking him more than a year. He flew days at a time, stopping only when he was so exhausted his wings could no longer keep him aloft. Most often he slept in remote areas, even in uncomfortable temperate lands, dining on whatever creatures crossed his path and would give him just enough sustenance to continue his journey. At times he would sleep in the water, floating like an iceberg and inadvertently drawing in curious creatures and fishermen. Only on a few occasions was he able to rest in climes frigid enough to suit him.

Initially drawn to the vast icy glacier south of the Plains of Dust, Gellidus basked in the snow for months as he studied and devoured the few barbarians and walrus-men he found. The brutality and austerity of the land appealed to him. However, after a time he decided the glacier was not enough of a conquest.

HOLDINGS

Gellidus craved power. A dictator must have minions, he realized. So the wyrm looked to warmer lands with larger populations, and set his sights on Southern Ergoth. He took the island continent by surprise, as the humans and elves who lived there had no reason to anticipate a white dragon would desire a temperate land that boasted a desert. Though some of the residents were able to flee to Sancrist Isle and Cristyne, many remained trapped and under the white overlord's rule.

Calling upon his innate magic, the great wyrm gradually altered the climate, freezing the bays and smothering the land under dozens of feet of snow. By the time Southern Ergoth resembled a polar region, Gellidus had claimed the great human capital of Daltigoth, all of Zhea Harbor, Pontigoth, Morgash Lake, the south Sirrion Sea isles and Foghaven Vale, also called the Vale of the Dragon.

Blizzards continually besiege the island continent, and freezing winds and paralyzing temperatures hold sway. Incredible storms strike the Straits of Algoni to the east, propelled by the cold air of Gellidus's realm. As a result, gales almost constantly batter the southwestern shores of Solamnia, and icebergs can be sighted off the coast. The harsh weather tends to keep adventurers away.

Only the land to the west of the Last Gaard Mountains in Southern Ergoth has been spared the brunt of the unnatural weather. Here a band of Knights of Solamnia huddle in Castle Eastwatch and protect the humans and elves who fled from the east of the island continent. Some believe the mountains partly block the great dragon's magic. However, others are certain Gellidus could turn the western part of the island continent into a frigid wasteland as well. They contend the dragon simply wants to provide a limited sanctuary for his "subjects" so they will not completely give up hope and make his reign less interesting.

Gellidus savors the viciously cold weather and spends most of his time prowling about Southern Ergoth. He is rarely found in his lair, which sits high in the glaciers that ring Foghaven Vale. The impressive lair consists of a series of massive caves which are sometimes occupied by the island's lesser white dragons.

ALLIES

Gellidus captured entire thanoi villages from the glacier south of the Plains of Dust. Bringing them to Southern Ergoth, he bade the walrus-men serve him or be eaten and directed them to stand guard over Huma's Tomb in Foghaven Vale. The dragon had learned the place was sacred to Solamnic Knights and to many of the people of Ansalon, and thus wanted this particular treasure well protected.

The dragon forged an alliance with the ogres of Southern Ergoth, who were once held in check by the humans and elves. The ogres have prospered and multiplied and now rule Daltigoth, the island continent's capital, in Lord Gellidus's name. Too, they keep watch over Morgash Bay, which is frozen solid.

The few draconians on Southern Ergoth have attempted to avoid the white wyrm. However, when Gellidus desires their assistance they know better than to deny him. Gellidus also has the fealty of other white dragons who have made the island their home. Among them are Glacier, an ancient female wyrm who secretly tries to manipulate the overlord, and Shiver, a young female who is utterly loyal. In exchange for Gellidus's protection and for some measure of power over the mortals north of Zhea Harbor, Shiver serves as his lieutenant and chief advisor.

Among the Overlords

Gellidus is a pivotal part of the great dragon overlords' council—but only because of any alliance and support he might offer to the other wyrms. It is doubtful he could best any of the other four, as they are larger, stronger, more intelligent, and command

greater mortal forces. He has come to accept that he will never lead the other dragons or enjoy any standing among them as Malystrixx does.

Gellidus early on announced his allegiance to Malystrixx the Red, becoming one of her consorts and aiding her plans to ascend to godhood. He recognized the great red's drive and capacity for evil and hoped she would award him castoff armies and land. But the Red's dream to become the new Takhisis was thwarted by a band of mortals, and Gellidus was sorely wounded in the assault. Afterwards he returned to Southern Ergoth. Now he only occasionally visits the Red, though she still favors him.

So far he has contented himself with ruling over his own frightened populace. Still, he secretly plots to expand his rule to Sancrist Isle and Cristyne, where no overlords hold sway. The white wyrm is building an army of walrus-men and ogres under the pretense of increasing the number of guards for his realm. His willingness to join forces with Beryllintranox is only because he believes that to refuse the Green could prove injurious to himself. Meanwhile he carefully watches his borders to make certain Beryl does not encroach upon his territory.



ONYSABET THE BLACK

She is called Sable by men, and she is the largest black dragon in all of Ansalon. Her dull, oil black body stretches one hundred and twenty feet. Her tail is nearly again that long. Her batlike wings tuck in close to her body, allowing her to slip through the swamp like a serpent, and her eyes glow with a dim saffron light reflecting the shade of yellowed ivory horns that sweep down from her horse-shaped head. She is as dark as the swamp in which she makes her home, virtually invisible to most visitors. Despite her great bulk, she is eerily silent, and her temperament is as acidic as the cloud of death she can breathe.

Onysabet was the last of the great wyrms to take up the mantle of overlord. Curiosity drew her to Krynn, as she noticed the Red, Malystrixx, and later the Green, Beryllintranox, leaving their homeland. She followed these others, finding the great journey incredibly taxing to one used to slithering through swamps. Onysabet swam during most of the trip, flying only when islands and continents barred her way. She slept for weeks at a time at the bottom of oceans, her ability to breathe water as easily as air keeping her hidden from men. And she dined on sharks and whales to supplement her strength. It took her nearly two years.

By the time she reached the realm of Malys and Beryl, fights among dragons had already broken out. It was the beginning of the Dragon Purge, initiated by the great Red, and it was almost enough to send Sable back home. Still, the crafty Black knew there must be something about this land to keep the Red and Green here. So she joined the fray, and after years of fighting above the lands that bordered the New Sea, the Black won the right to claim a chunk of Ansalon for herself.

Onysabet chose the New Coast area, not so much because the land was attractive but because she was exhausted from the battles and wanted no more fighting with dragonkind. The land was not to her tastes—it was far too dry; for months she traveled in the forests while she recovered from the Dragon Purge, capturing humans—whom she questioned extensively about her new homeland before she killed them. When she had regained her strength, and had learned Malystrixx and Beryllintranox were shaping their own domains, Sable decided to do likewise.

Calling upon her innate magical strength, and picturing the swamps of her former homeland, the massive Black began to mold the temperate forests and grasslands into a fetid bog.

HOLDINGS

Onysabet's swamp stretches to the southern Khalkist Mountains and occupies the lands formerly known as New Coast, Blödehelm, and all of the Blöde Plains. It took her almost three years to turn practically every arid and forested acre into a spongy marsh. Stagnant water lies thick across the land, and thick vine-draped trees stretch to the sky and form a dense leafy canopy that allows little sun to seep through—making the land seem as if it is blanketed in eternal night. The air is heavy with the scent of death.

Enriched by Sable's magic, the lizards, snakes, and birds that took up residence grew to abnormal proportions. Thorns choke what used to be trade routes through the land. Although the majority of the area's landmarks are submerged, the Thon-Richass River and Blood River still flow, their banks teeming with hungry crocodiles and alligators. The air is humid and filled with constantly buzzing insects. The winters are mild. And the fishing in the weed-choked New Sea is good—for those brave enough to traverse the waters.

Most of the residents fled the area as it grew increasingly warm and wet. The unfortunates who were not quick enough live as slaves in the ruins of Takar, a once great city partially sunken in brackish water. The City of Morning Dew lies abandoned on the southern edge of Sable's territory. Occasionally, bands of barbarians from the Plains of Dust carefully graze their herds on the outskirts.

ALLIES

Onysabet is a loner, rarely desiring the company of other dragons. Some speculate it is her haughtiness that keeps her apart. However, others claim she is distrustful, fearing that if other great creatures get too close they will detect weaknesses they can exploit. Despite her separatism, she has a considerable number of minions—primarily draconians and ogres who serve the dragon in exchange for their lives and some measure of authority. They oversee her slaves and her "menagerie," which is a

collection of rare swamp creatures she has acquired over the years and unusual beasts, which she created through various experiments. Much of that menagerie, as well as her choicest slaves, are kept in her citadel in Shrentak, which due to her magical nurturing has become a rocky isle in the midst of her swamp. The lair is replete with natural and dragon-made caverns, most of which are filled with stagnant water.

Her trusted minions hunt for her, and her slaves mine precious ores to add to her treasure pile. The vile dragon seems to covet wealth almost as much as she revels in her menagerie. However, she has been known to part with riches to acquire creatures even rarer than those she already possesses.

Among her allies are bakali, lizard-men at one time thought extinct. They loyally serve their queen without question, as they know she is the one who created the blessed swamp. Lesser black dragons also serve her in exchange for her goodwill. They know to keep their distance and to bother her only when adventurers are caught trespassing in the swamp. Among those dragons is one named Mintigoth, a large male whom humans call Oil. He spends much of his time patrolling the swamp in search of intruders, interesting specimens, and news of the neighboring lands. His son, Ricandroth, also called Dire, occasionally guards the great Black's lair.

AMONG THE OVERLORDS

Onysabet knows that while she is immensely powerful compared to Krynn's natural dragons, she is far from the most dominant of the overlords. Only Gellidus is beneath her in magical and physical might. Because of this, she remains respectful of the other overlords, not wanting to risk their anger; wisely she sides with the most powerful—Malystrixx. The great Black fears Malys above all others, as the red could turn Sable's swamps to cinders. Secretly, however, she favors Khellendros's and Gales's plans. Though Sable's temperament seems more closely aligned with Beryl's, the Black does not care for the green. Onysabet believes that Beryl—above all others—cannot be trusted.



BERYLLINTHRANOX THE GREEN

The Green Peril, Krynn's mortals call her. The massive green dragon was the third of the overlords to make her home on Krynn, following in the wake of Malys and Khellendros. Beryllinthranox's heavily muscular form is a hundred and fifty feet long, with a tail again that length. Deceptively delicate-looking wings sweep back from her body and grant her the ability to quickly pivot in the air. Those wings, thin and leathery and colored a dark green the shade of wet moss, are surprisingly resilient. They have withstood the claws and teeth of many lesser dragons, and when she beats them furiously they can buffet the land, toppling trees and hurling creatures and men vast distances. Her head is vaguely equine-shaped, her horns thin and rising from the top of her brow, like priceless ivory. Her claws are sharp and hard as the finest steel, her eyes flash bright yellow to olive-green depending on the light and her surroundings.

Beryllinthranox, often called Beryl, followed Malys to this new world. The trip took the better part of a year, and though it was exhausting, the Green profited from it. Because she so taxed herself physically, she grew more muscular, and her wings toughened to become nearly indestructible. She flew for several days at a time, and when she rested it was usually on small islands that were left lifeless by her feeding frenzy. Sometimes she was forced to rest in the water, floating for a week at a time to regain her strength. After one particularly long flight, Beryl was so fatigued she hid herself in a forest, sleeping for nearly two months.

Eventually she reached Ansalon, and after exploring the eastern part of the world she sought out Malystrix. Beryllinthranox was urged by Malystrix to claim part of Krynn as her own and to subdue lesser dragons and steal their energy. The Green was quick to take the larger dragon's advice, as Beryl feared unless she and others established their own kingdoms Malys would eventually consume all of Krynn. Beryl is manipulative, cunning, and believes she can ultimately triumph over Malys.



HOLDINGS

Beryl's domain is considerable, covering Qualinesti lands south to the Kharolis shore and east to Thorbardin. She controls the monument of Pax Tharkas, the city of Tarsis, and the fabled Wayreth forest. The monument is her prize, as it symbolizes peace among humans, dwarves, and elves. Skullcap, once a tower of sorcery, stands to the south of Pax Tharkas and occasionally teases the Green's curiosity. The tower was damaged when the mage Fistantikus melted the stone into the rough shape of a skull. Magics are said to be hidden within, though so far Beryl has yet to discover them.

The land for the most part agreed with the green dragon—temperate and forest-filled. However, within months of slaying all dragon challengers, and greedily absorbing their power, she began to work her magic and turn her land into a dream realm. To the south, the tundra became wooded and warmer—causing the walrus men and ice bears to flee. The temperate forest to the north became denser, lusher, more primitive. The trees grew taller and thicker, and all manner of animals were drawn to it. The earth became richer in order to support the abundant plant life. And in turn, the great forest nurtured Beryl and intensified her magic, pleased her spirit, and allowed her turn her attention to other matters—dominating the mortals who dwelled in her domain.

The great green dragon lords it over elves, humans and Neidar dwarves. Though she discovered that killing elves in a certain fashion released a type of energy that she could channel to create magical items, she is careful not to indulge in this practice. She wants her subjects to respect and obey her, to live in fear of her. She does not want them so terrified of her that they become useless. A few elves manage to escape from time to time, but the borders are guarded, blocking a mass exodus.

The Green's lair is deep in the heart of the Qualinesti forest, hidden by underbrush that is impenetrable practically to all save the dragon and her chosen minions, which include deadly sentient plants. Well-guarded and thick with magic and humidity, the place is comforting to the dragon—and terrifying to the mortals unfortunate enough to be found in her presence. The skulls of Beryl's victims line one of the massive chambers.

ALLIES

In the years since the Dragon Purge, lesser green dragons have taken up residence in Beryl's domain—with the overlord's consent. These include Chameleus, a large male who commands a dozen smaller green dragons who hunt and act as sentries for the overlord; Dreselenimus, also called Venom, who Beryl considers a minor servant and errand boy; Ichlonadrait, or Idor, who works as an intermediary with the Knights of Neraka; and Vale, or Virtrian, a young male who is a very effective spy, moving silently throughout her realm and keeping his eyes trained on the elves, humans, and Dark Knights.

Among her subordinates are draconians—roughly a hundred baaz and kapaks commanded by sivak overseers. Too, many small elven communities have sworn loyalty to the dragon, believing she is truly good for the land and that siding with her will ensure the continuance of their proud race.

AMONG THE OVERLORDS

Beryllinthranox believes she is second only to Malys, confident that Khellendros is too caught up in personal goals to make a play for primacy of the overlords. Beryl is shrewd, careful to appear an ally to each of the other great dragons. She appears cooperative to Gellidus, respectful to Khellendros, and loyal to Malys—though she has objected to the Red's plans on occasion. Although she greatly distrusts Onysabiet, she has given the Black no cause to oppose her. Indeed, Beryl has even sent minions into Sable's territory to warn the Black about trespassing bands of knights and adventurers.

Yet the Green is bent on acquiring more power—and more land. Beryl relishes her subjects and armies of spawn and draconians. She dreams of taking the Red's place as leader and becoming the guiding force on Krynn. In her bid for more might, the Green has ordered her most loyal elves, minion dragons, and draconians to search for the Tower of Wayreth. She knows it appears in her forest from time to time, and she believes that capturing it will bring her prestige and arcane strength. Too, she has been gathering magical items from ruins within her territory and from wayward travelers. Magic is the key to overthrowing Malys, the Green believes—magic and the slyness and audacity to use it.

KHELLENDROS THE BLUE

The great blue dragon is frighteningly beautiful, with scales the color of glistening sapphires, a sleek form, and wickedly slanted eyes that flash with anger and seem to reflect the lightning he coaxes from overhead and breathes with zest. From nose to tail tip, he measures at least four hundred feet long. His wings are dark azure on top, covered with smaller, shimmering scales. Underneath they are nearly as dark as midnight. His talons are impossibly sharp, the color of aged ivory. The horns that curl gracefully upward from his massive head are dark at the base, lightening to nearly white at the tips.

He calls himself the Storm Over Krynn, an apt name given how he commands the rain and lightning. Called Skie by humans, the great blue wyrm is the only overlord native to Krynn. Khellendros spent decades upon decades in a place called the Gray, a misty realm where spirits drift. He grew in size and power there as he searched for Kitiara. He was paired with this daring human, a highlord in the Knights of Takhisis, during the War of the Lance. She died after the war—when she was away from him. The dragon communicated with her spirit in the Gray, and pledged that he would find her and bring her back to life.

When Khellendros returned to Krynn, intending to stay only long enough to acquire a corporeal form for Kitiara, he discovered that only a few years had passed in the world. He quickly learned that during that time another war had been waged, this one in the Abyss against Chaos, the Father of All and of Nothing. Though mortals won this battle with the aid of dragons, the price was high. The gods were no longer a presence on Krynn, and magic had all but vanished.

With the magic went Khellendros's ability to access the portals and return to the Gray. The great Blue refused to surrender his pledge to Kitiara, however, and searched for a way to reach her again. Malystrixx, the massive red dragon who had taken over Kendemore, Khur, and other lands to the east, drew his attention. Khellendros knew Malys was foreign to Ansalon and suspected that one day she would play a role in reuniting him with his beloved Kitiara.

Khellendros was quick to follow in the Red's path—slaying lesser dragons and absorbing their power and claiming a large area of Krynn for himself. He gathered magic and might, manipulated the other overlords, and eventually was able to open the portals again. Though his holdings are considerable, he doesn't deign to watch over them personally. His lieutenant Gale handles this mundane task.

HOLDINGS

Khellendros oversees the Northern Wastes and most of the Vingaard Mountains. This includes Coastlund, Elkholm, Hinterlund, Tanith, and the once proud city of Palanthas. The Blue was most interested in the city and terrorized the people there as he searched for enchantments in the great library and in the High Clerist's Tower. Magic, he knew, was the key to realizing his ambitions.

Much of the Northern Wastes suited him—it was hot and dry. However, after studying Malys's terraforming techniques, he was quick to copy her. The desert grew, became warmer still, the sand turned from coarse tan to a brilliant white. He created several magnificent lairs within his desert home, the largest being a series of limestone caverns in the northern foothills of the Vingaard Mountains. They are all well-guarded, their entrances hidden.

Little water can be found in Khellendros's desert, though the dragon has sculpted a few oases for his minions. The area is known for its brief and terrible storms, which bring rain that is soaked up by the desert's unrelenting heat.

West of the mountains, where Palanthas and other cities rest, the land is unchanged. Some speculate the Blue had no interest in extending the desert beyond the mountains. However, others are certain the dragon merely wanted to accommodate his subjects. There would be few subjects indeed if there were only sand and heat.

ALLIES

Khellendros's allies are many—perhaps more than even Malystrixx can claim. His most dedicated follower is Gale, a large blue dragon who rules his land when the

greater dragon is busy venturing beyond the portals. Gale, or Gallinthus, was blinded in a fight with his former rider, Dhamon, a onetime Knight of Takhisis, and has learned to use his other senses to compensate. Crafty and dangerous, Gale is thoroughly loyal to Khellendros, feeling genuine affection for the great Blue.

The Blue commands significant numbers of Knights of Takhisis, bands of barbarians, ogres, goblins, and hundreds of spawn—draconianlike creatures he created. Too, there are other lesser blue dragons in the desert. Among them is Bakatarian, a female humans have dubbed Bluefire, who toys with the passions of the lesser dragons.

Khellendros's allies see to the running of the cities along the coasts, particularly Palanthas, which is heavily seeded with faithful human agents. The dragon rarely visits the cities, usually only if word of a magical trinket reaches his ears or when the people gain too much hope or prosperity.

He has no desire to increase the scope of his land. His only desire is to find Kitiara and fly with her again.

AMONG THE OVERLORDS

Khellendros is the most driven of the dragons, ceaseless in efforts to reach his goal. Physically, only Malystrixx might best him. Still, he keeps his place as Malys's second, so he does not have to concern himself with all the world's troubles and all the dragons' schemes. He continues to pursue his own agenda. At the same time, he knows the Green Peril desires to usurp Malys, and he has done nothing to warn the Red. The Blue does not mind rivalry among the overlords, and anticipates the inevitable battle that will break out among them. He intends to sit back and watch.

The Storm has little respect for Gellidus, whom he considers dim-witted, and little regard for Onysablet, who busies herself with her creatures and treasure. Still, he feigns a rapport with them.

MALYSTRIX THE RED

She is the largest of Krynn's dragon overlords, stretching more than four hundred feet from nose to tail tip. Great batlike wings sprout from her muscular back and reach more than five hundred feet across when fully extended. Her scales are the color of fresh blood, and they eerily reflect the fire she loves to breathe and bask in. Her horns are tall and imposing, curving away from a head framed by spiky jowls.

Malys was the first of the foreign dragons to find her way to Krynn, and nearly all of Ansalon's dragons consider her the supreme being in this land. A true monster, she strikes quickly and without mercy, relishing the destruction and misery.

Her journey to Ansalon was arduous. She flew for as much as a week at a time, taxing her wings unmercifully. She rested on whatever ground she spotted when she could fly no more. When there was no ground in sight, she called upon her magic to create an invisible resting spot above the waves. Eventually she spotted a large stretch of land, on a day when she was so physically exhausted she could not fly another mile. It was an island filled with trees that provided her just enough shade while she slept. When she awoke nearly a month later, she began her horrible conquest of Ansalon.

HOLDINGS

Malystrixx fought no one for her territory, as the humans, kender, and other creatures were not strong enough to put up any genuine resistance. The dragons she discovered, those with lairs in her path, were vanquished without too much exertion or injury—and in the process Malys discovered she could absorb their arcane strength, adding to her own power. This pleased Malystrixx greatly, and thus she initiated the fabled Dragon Purge, inciting other great wyrms to slay lesser dragons and steal their power. With fewer dragons in this new land, there would be less threat to Malys.

The Red dominates a great stretch of eastern Ansalon, indeed the largest territory held by any overlord. She is the ruler of Khur, Balifor, Kendemore, the Elian Wilds, Misty Isle, and what was once called the Dairly Plains. She burned much of the land with her

horrible breath, turning forests into badlands and expanses of rocky wastes—together called The Desolation. Almost by accident she discovered she could sculpt the land by concentrating and expending some of her magical energies. Mountains grew seemingly overnight, and continued to grow until they were tall, imposing peaks. One such mountainous area became a veritable work of art, as the great Red worked on it for weeks, forming a single massive mountain ringed at its plateau by active volcanoes. This she designated her favorite lair.

Frequently earthquakes rock the land, and usually they are of Malys's creation. The land is achingly dry. When it rains, the ground quickly burns it up. Only a few plants manage to stay alive. However, the far eastern coast is a little more fortunate. Savanna grasses spring up from time to time when the sea-borne rains arrive.

ALLIES

Goblins, ogres, draconians, Brutes, Knights of Neraka, and renegade barbarian tribes comprise the red's formidable army of minions. They serve out of fear and out of the hope they can gain a little power for themselves. The ogres are perhaps the most terrifying, with several thousand among Malys's forces. They are led by a cunning warlord. The goblins number ten times that many but are not useful for demanding military campaigns. The great Red allows small towns of humans and kender to exist—in part to give her forces something to shepherd and tyrannize. The majority of these communities are along the coast, including Port Balifor.

Several lesser red dragons have sworn their loyalty to Malystrixx. These include a large female and her two smaller brothers. Hollintress has been allied with Malys the longest. She has the ability to magically disguise herself as an ogre, draconian, and more. Men call her Firebird, and she is known for undertaking long and torturous missions for the red overlord. Kerasheel and Rydian, Hollintress's brothers, patrol the fringe territories of The Desolation. They are far more patient than their sister and Malys, and do not attack without orders or provocation.

AMONG THE OVERLORDS

Malys is the undisputed leader of the dragon overlords. She rules them harshly, but her years on Krynn have tempered her impetuous nature and keep her from acting like an utter despot. She knows when to concede to the other dragons—as acting in concert they might overpower her.

The Red lords it over Beryllintranox, who covets her position and who does not have the power to challenge her. She often lavishes praise upon Onysablar the Black and Gellidus the White, whom she knows are the least of the overlords. Despite her confidence in her own physical and magical abilities, she fears treachery. She regularly sends draconian spies and Knights of Neraka into the other overlords' realms to report on activities. Rarely, however, does she herself fly into another overlord's territory.

She is forever sculpting the land within her domain. She raises new mountains and widens streams of lava. She occasionally levels villages, destroying all the humans and kender within. She is experimenting with raising the land at the bottom of the Courrain Ocean, which would extend her territory to the east.



BY TALIDUS PRALEX

EXCERPTED FROM THE ANNALS OF THE 423RD HYRTAMIC GAMES

There are as many kinds of tournaments as there are peoples in Ansalon. The elves of Qualinesti have their song-duels or jousts. In fallen Istar, it was the gladiatorial games—a practice that lives on among the minotaurs of the Blood Sea. Even the gnomes of Mount Nevermind have grand melees of clockwork warriors, which have an unfortunate tendency to attack spectators or simply explode.

Volumes have been penned about all of these—whole shelves of the great library of Palanthas are devoted to Solamnian tournaments. It was with some shock, then, that I discovered no writer had ever set quill to parchment on the subject of the Hyrtamic Games.

The Hyrtamic Games are among the greatest tournaments in the known world, but have been seldom seen by human eyes. They are held in the depths of Darken Wood by the centaurs who dwell within that murky forest. The horse-folk are secretive about their games: even those who live within sight

of the Wood know little of them. I grew up in Haven Vale, so I heard tell of them, but they are largely a mystery to those who walk on only two feet.

When I discovered the lack of writings on the subject in the great library, I knew I had found a calling. With scrolls and inkstone in hand, I journeyed south to Abanasinia. After some time spent with my family, I set forth into Darken Wood itself.

My brother Jophas and his wife were horrified that I should undertake such a voyage. There were terrible things afoot in the forest, they warned me. The horse-folk had run wild after the Summer of Chaos. For years they had warred amongst themselves, emerging from the Wood only to murder lone, unfortunate travelers. When I pressed the matter, however, Jophas admitted that the strife had ended, quite suddenly, some ten years after the Second Cataclysm. Five more years had passed since then. I smiled at my brother's tales and went on my way.

Darken Wood is at once one of the most beautiful, and the most frightening places I have visited. It is ancient, its black trees growing so large and close that their branches let little light through to the forest floor. Despite maps and lodestone, I was not two hours into the forest before I became spectacularly lost. I wandered

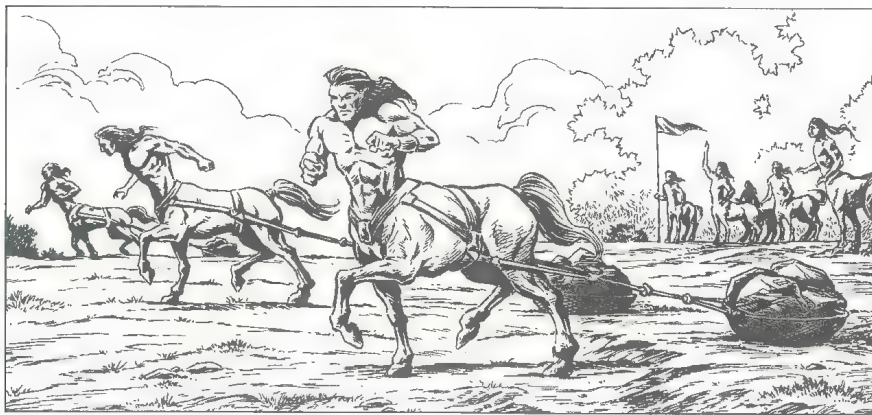
for hours until night fell with no idea where I was. I lay down by a brook, not daring to light a fire, praying that predators would not devour me, and soon fell asleep.

I awoke surrounded by hooves. A dozen centaurs had crept up while I slept and stood with bows and lances trained upon me. They were wild beasts, with painted hides and tattooed skin. Their heads were shaven, save for long braids and tassels that hung down their backs. I later learned that this was the way of the Laughing Brook tribe, which had been all but destroyed after the Summer of Chaos. Most other centaurs don't look nearly so fearsome. At the time, though, I was certain the savage creatures meant to cut off my head and stake it at the Wood's edge, as a warning to those who thought to enter.

"Fear not, two-legs," said their leader. He spoke the common tongue, albeit an archaic form, full of *thees* and *thous* and *thins*. "We have no wish to harm thee ... yet. But pray, why hast thou entered our home?"

Terrified, I could only tell him the truth. He listened thoughtfully as I explained my intent, and he spoke with the others in their lilting, liquid tongue. At last, with a horselike toss of his head, he lifted his spear and stepped back, bidding me rise.

"Thou art fortunate, then," he said, "for the Games are but a short time off. Come: we will take thee to



Neothax and present thee to the Circle of Four."

It was only later that I discovered how lucky I'd been. The centaurs don't take kindly to intruders, and would have herded me, naked, out of the forest, lashing me with brambles all the way, had I not said why I'd come. All that saved me was that I'd come unarmed. Thank Gilean I'd spurned my brother's advice to take his mace!

So I rode to Neothax, a palisaded collection of barnlike huts and open meadows that serves as the horse-folk's capital. It is a new town, built five years ago; the old one, Ithax, was razed during the centaurs' war. Surrounded by vineyard-dotted hills in Darken Wood's largest clearing, Neothax seems small compared with the mightiest human cities. Aphremas told me Ithax had been much larger, but many centaurs had perished during the recent troubles, and the survivors would be long rebuilding.

As with most things they do, the centaur greeting ceremony involved drinking wine. To be honest, I found their legendary vintage sour and unsubtle, but it was still refreshing after our long ride. Aphremas and the warriors at Neothax's gates drank astounding quantities without effect. Centaurs can consume vast amounts of the grape, and take great pride in the fact. When the drinking was done, Aphremas escorted me into the town.

Neothax was bustling with centaurs of all colors—brown and black, chestnut and bay, gray and white. They wear their manes long, some all the way down to their withers. Some braid their hair or tie it up with feathers and bright beads, but all wear their tails free. The tail is a centaur's greatest pride. Touching or insulting it is a sure way to inspire its owner's wrath. Cutting it off is a punishment reserved for only the worst criminals.

Centaur homes are simple, built of daub and wattle and thatch, and tend toward open walls instead of doors. Except for the occasional table, and simple beds of rushes, they have no furniture: what good is a chair to a horse-man? Likewise, they have little use for clothes—their warriors wear bronze and leather war harnesses, but otherwise both stallions and mares go naked. Modesty is not a virtue the horse-folk care for.

The centaurs were aloof at my presence, but the children found me fascinating. By the time we reached the center of town, a small mob of colts and fillies had gathered, shouting questions and taunts at me.

In the center of Neothax atop a low hill is a pasture of sweet-smelling grass with a ring of standing stones in its midst. This is the Yard of Gathering, where the tribal chieftains have held court since their ancestors' time. After a ritual that involved eating some of the grass—something I will never have a taste for—Aphremas led me across the Yard to meet the Circle of Four.

Though the centaurs are in many ways a single people, they still divide themselves into tribes. At present there are four such bands—Ebon Lance, Soaring Mane, Green Willow, and Iron Hooves. The chiefs of each tribe form the Circle, with one chosen as High Chief to rule over all. Not long ago, there were seven tribes, but three of them, including Aphremas's clan, are now nearly extinct. The centaurs proved reluctant to explain how this happened, but it was clearly tied to the strife that wracked Darken Wood after the Chaos War. Perhaps a future scribe can coax more out of them when their wounds are not as fresh.

I would like to say I was well-received by the Circle, but I fear that was not the case. Instead they were furious, with both Aphremas and myself. The chieftains didn't take lightly the idea of an outsider coming to Neothax uninvited, and the High Chief, Eucleia of the Iron Hooves, was the most strident of all in her displeasure. I protested, explaining why I had come, and Aphremas spoke on my behalf as well, but to little avail. Several of the chiefs resolved to have me driven out of Darken Wood.

Fortunately, however, that judgment wasn't unanimous. One of the chiefs, Gyrtomon of the Soaring Mane, was more sympathetic than the rest, and urged the others to be lenient. This led to much heated argument among the chiefs, but in the end Gyrtomon swayed two others, Pleuron of the Green Willow and Lanorica of the Ebon Lance. Only Lady Eucleia herself remained against me, and finally she relented, on the condition that I swear an oath to leave Darken

toming themselves to their new teams. Each color met at a different corner of the playing field and chose which members would take part in what contests. I was not permitted to attend these moots, as the centaurs feared I might accidentally reveal their strategies to the other colors.

Instead, I spent the day in Neothax, among the elder horse-folk. They were not idle in this time, for they were preparing for the other key form of entertainment that takes place during the Games: wagering. Centaurs are inveterate gamblers, and will while away many an hour playing at dice or *Boidron*, a game involving colored stones whose rules I've never been able to comprehend. Some will bet on the smallest thing whether a falling leaf will land in sunlight or shadow, for instance, or how many birds will alight upon a particular branch. Neothax was aflutter as the centaurs laid odds and began taking wagers on which colors would win what contests. I learned that the blue team was favored to win the Seeking, as their leader was one Arhedion, a scout of heroic repute. The green team falling close behind, with a mare, named Iomasseia, most likely to place second; the red and gold teams had both had poorer luck, and were not considered serious threats, although they were favored to win some of the other contests.

At sunset, the horse-folk gathered at the sporting field once more. In its midst, the Circle, masked once more, stood before a tall pile of wood. Eucleia poured wine upon the pyre, then set it alight. As the flames grew, each athlete came forward, announced what contest he or she would enter, then threw a wreath of oak leaves onto the flames. Xerbanion stood by, committing each name to memory. The captains of the four colors came last of all, and swore that their teams would vie fairly at all times. This oath, Aphremas explained, was sacrosanct; if anyone cheated, his or her whole team would be disqualified from the rest of the Games, and the captain would be shamed until the next Hyrtath had passed.

Once the oath was sworn, Eucleia ritually blessed the Games in Chislev's name. The centaurs remained in the field, chanting, talking and drinking, until the sacrificial bonfire burned down, then quenched the

embers and dispersed, retiring early so they would not be weary at dawn, when the Games began.

I confess I found it hard to sleep for anticipation, and awoke while the sky was still dark, so I would not miss a moment of the Games. To my dismay, I discovered I'd already failed. Arhedion, Iomasseia, and the other runners participating in the Seeking had left in the middle of the night, riding south toward the White-Rage River, where they would turn east and start circling the forest, to return in five days. I was appalled that I had missed this, but when I complained to Aphremas he shook his head and told me it was ritual for the Seeking to begin in secret, with none, not even the Circle, to see. This didn't quell my disappointment, but done is done, and there were many other events to watch.

Centaurs, athletes and spectators both, began to arrive at the field as the sky lightened in the east. The morning stars were still shining when the chieftains declared the first day open and called upon the athletes to begin.

The Games, as I've said, are five days long, and two contests happen each day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. As many as seventy centaurs participate in each event, so the competition can carry on for hours before a winner emerges. After triumphing, the victor is crowned with a wreath of oak leaves and given a place of honor at the north end of the field.

The first day's focus is on physical strength. The centaurs who compete in these events tend to be huge, big as draft horses and broad as ogres. Almost all are male: few mares have the raw power to compete with the mightiest stallions, although a few females have won these events in the past.

In the morning, the sport is *Hikloithon*, or Weight-Hauling. The contestants pair off and don harnesses on their backs attached to large baskets. Along the way, other centaurs place stones in the baskets. The rocks are all of the same weight, and are added to the baskets every twenty paces. The contest ends when both athletes cannot move any farther, and the victor is whoever has a heavier load when that happens.

Throughout the morning, I watched centaur after centaur strain against their burdens. There was much

sweating and grunting, and the onlookers cheered and threw handfuls of grain as they urged their favorites on, then argued over their bets when the contest was done. At last, as the sun neared its zenith, only two stallions remained, one each from the blue team and the red team. Each had been hauling more than thirty twenty-pound stones when his opponents were eliminated in the previous round. They took their places and began again. Supporters of the blue team and red team shouted for their favorites and stamped their hooves upon the ground.

The stones piled up, now ten, now twenty, now thirty, and still neither centaur stopped. Only when they reached forty-five stones—nearly half a ton—did the blue team's stallion finally falter. The Circle crowned the red team's stallion with the champion's wreath, then there was an hour's pause so the field could be prepared for the next event.

In the afternoon, the competition was *Gabarbon*, the Stone Throw. This is similar to some dwarven sports, as it focuses on how far contestants can hurl a heavy rock. The rock itself is enormous, an oblong stone weighing forty pounds, and the centaurs must throw it so that it spins at least twice before landing. Failing to spin the rock, or overstepping the throwing line results in disqualification. Of course, the centaur who hurls the stone the farthest wins.

Again, the competition went on for hours, amid wild cheering. I was amazed at how far the horse-folk could throw their rocks. The poorest tosses exceeded ten yards, which would have been excellent for a human. In the end, the victor—the same stallion from the blue team who had lost the Weight-Hauling competition—threw his stone fifty-two feet.

Once the victor was crowned, the centaurs dispersed for the night. I had expected celebrations to mark the day's triumphs, but there were none. Aphremas explained that all festivities would be held when the Games ended, four days hence. I note this because the horse-folk seldom miss a chance to celebrate. Births, weddings, coming-of-age ceremonies, sowing, reaping, victories at war—all are marked with feasting and drink, music and dance. But the centaurs

consider it bad luck to hold revels before the riders have returned from the Seeking, so the nights during the Games are quiet.

The next day, the spectators all gathered at one end of the field, rather than spreading out around it. This was because of the day's events: spear-casting and archery. Spear-casting is a simple affair—the centaurs are allowed a running start, then must throw a spear as far as they can. This event, like the previous day's competitions, was dominated by stallions, though the contestants were not nearly as massive as the weight-haulers or stone-throwers.

The centaurs seldom throw spears in battle it proves too awkward in a forest as thick as Darken Wood, preferring instead to use them as lances. On open ground, however, they are fearsome indeed. Thanks to their strength and speed, they can throw their weapons much farther than ordinary men. Few casts flew less than a hundred feet, and the eventual victor, a stallion from the green team, hurled his spear nearly fifty yards to take the oak wreath.

In the afternoon came the archery contest, which was one of the highlights of the Games. While humans and elves normally fire while standing still, centaur archery is much more active. Five targets are set up across the field, at various distances. The archer is required to run past them, from left to right, and fire without stopping. This form of archery results in more missed shots than the conventional sort, but it is considerably more exciting. The victor was another green team member—a mare this time, for many of the horse-folk's best archers are female—who struck four of the five targets dead center, and missed the middle of the fifth, which was some two hundred yards away, by a mere hand's breadth. I shudder to think how deadly the centaurs' bows must be in wartime.

The third day of the Games is dominated by hand-to-hand combat. In the morning, the event is Club-Sparring, which is a ritualized duel fought with cudgels. The clubs in this contest are not the stout oaken bludgeons the centaurs normally use, but sticks padded with woven grass to keep bones from breaking during the fights. Furthermore, the combatants' aim is

not to batter their opponents into submission, but simply to strike specific targets painted on each other's bodies, on shoulders and stomach, withers and hindquarters. Before a bout begins, the padded clubs are soaked with red dye. A hit is scored when one of the targets is obscured by this fake blood. The first warrior to strike all his foe's targets wins the bout; in addition, no fight may last more than a count of three hundred. If the time expires and neither warrior has scored a sure victory, the one who has struck more of his foe's targets wins.

This is an extremely thrilling competition, especially in the early rounds, when dozens of pairs are sparring simultaneously. With the exception of the Chase, which I will describe shortly, it also results in the most injuries, though these tend to be little more than bruises and the occasional lost tooth. Combatants who seek to harm their opponents are disqualified, so the fighters tend to pull their blows or score glancing hits instead. This makes the sport a test of agility rather than strength, and there were as many mares involved as there were stallions. In fact, both combatants who made it to the final round, a gold member and a blue member, were female. In the end, neither struck all of her opponent's targets, and the blue mare won, four hits to three.

The afternoon competition was wrestling, which proved just as exciting as the sparring. Centaur wrestling differs from the human variety: the way the horse-folk are built makes it much harder to throw an opponent, and also for a wrestler to rise again after falling. Thus, most matches consist of the two combatants circling each other, looking for an opening, then rushing together and grappling until one finally falls. Grabbing a foe's mane or tail is forbidden, as is striking with the hooves, but nearly everything else is allowed, which makes for some of the most vicious competitions in all of the Games. Injuries are common—even expected—and bad tempers often flare. At least six wrestlers were disqualified for misconduct before the afternoon was done. In the end, it was a red team member who won—a stallion named Trepas, who was brother to Chief Gyrtomon of the Soaring Mane—and he came out of the contest with a split

lip and a sprained wrist.

The fourth day dawned, but unlike the previous morn, no event began at sunrise. Instead, the centaurs gathered at the field and waited, their eyes turned to the north. I asked Aphremas what this meant. "The Seeking is halfway done," he said. "Or rather, it was yesterday. The spotters should arrive soon to speak of what they saw."

Unbeknownst to me, the horse-folk had dispatched a party of colts and fillies to the north of the forest, where it runs up into the highlands. From a vantage on Prayers Eye Peak, these spotters watched for signs of the racers. Once the runners passed, the spotters descended and galloped back to Neothax. As the sun cleared the eastern hills, they arrived, shouting the names of the racers who'd taken the lead. "Arhedion of the blue team runs first!" called one colt, to whoops of joy from those who'd bet on the scout.

"Iomasseia of the green team is right behind!" cried a filly. "Less than two furlongs, and moving like the mountain wind!"

This caused a stir among the onlookers. One of the front-runners would almost certainly win the race, but it was a surprise that they were so close. Two furlongs was a very short distance for Iomasseia to make up. The stakes rose as more furious betting ensued.

After a while the Circle restored order, and the day's events began. The fourth day of the Hyrtamic Games is devoted to the swift of hoof. In the morning, the sport is sprinting. In imitation of the Seeking, a track was set up around the field's edges, about half a league in length. Racers lined up in packs of eight to try for a chance to run in the finals. The sprint was a single lap around the field, with the winner of each heat moving on to vie for the oak wreath.

Compared with the enormous horse-men who had competed in the weight-haul on the first day, the runners seemed almost a different people. Slender and sleek, with long, muscular legs that devoured the ground at a fantastic pace, they ran race after race until only eight remained, gathered beneath the mid-day sun to see who could gallop the fastest. Of these

eight, six were mares.

The front-runner in the final race was a member of the gold team, a gray mare who moved like quicksilver across the field. When she pulled into the lead, a great cheer went up among the gold team, for they had yet to win an event.

Unfortunately for them, it was not to be. Their mare trod on a stinging nettle as she entered the final furlong of the race. It wasn't enough to make her fall, but the pain slowed her, and another mare, a member of the green team, crossed the line first. There was much spitting and cursing among the gold team as the victor strode forward to receive her reward.

The afternoon race, while not as fast, is much more grueling. It is called *Alamiton* in the centaur tongue, but it is commonly known simply as the Chase. It is the only event, except for the Seeking, that does not take place entirely within the playing field. Instead, the Chase follows a long, winding course through the forest. This is not an easy run, to be sure. While the centaurs had made sure the path was clear of impassable obstacles, it was still littered with stones, fallen logs and thickets, which the racers must overcome. Some of these jumps are set up in quick succession, three or four in a row; others are as tall as a man. Elsewhere, the path climbs and descends steep defiles. In two separate places it crosses a stream deep enough to slow a runner who chooses to ford it rather than leap over it. The leap, however, is far from easy, being more than a dozen feet across. Finally, after some five hard miles, the racers return—lathered and blowing hard—to the field, where they sprint the last quarter-mile to the finish.

The centaurs who compete in the Chase are possibly the best all-around athletes at the Games. They must have not only speed but also agility, strength, and endurance. Many don't finish the race. Falls and injuries are more common in the Chase than in any other event at the Games. The centaurs run in four heats of eight, with the two fastest racers in each heat proceeding to the final race. Of the four heats, only one saw all racers reach the finish unhurt.

The final Chase was evenly split among stallions and mares, with four each competing. Two of them—

a mare from the red team and a green team stallion—injured themselves and were forced to withdraw. The rest struggled through, however, and less than ten minutes after they vanished into the woods, they returned, hooves pounding the earth. There were three clearly in front, switching positions again and again until finally, at the finish, a stallion from the blue team emerged as the winner, and promptly collapsed on the grass, exhausted. So ended the second-to-last day of the Games.

When the final day dawned, the sky was dark with rain clouds and the centaurs were restless. The racers in the Seeking were on their way south again, bound once more for Neothax. They would return nearer to dusk. The blue team and green team were shouting support for Arhedion and Iomasseia as they awaited the start of the first event. The gold team, meanwhile, was anxious for a different reason. Today was their last chance to avoid ending the Games without a victory. The final day's events differed from those of the first four, as they are team events instead of individual events. The morning's sport was called *Kómoroth*, or the "Ride of Hammers." It is similar in many ways to a game the riders of Khur call *Chaugan*, and its intent is simple. Each team consists of nine riders, each of whom carries a long-handled wooden mallet. Using these mallets, they must knock a wooden ball into a narrow goal area at the edge of the field. The first team to do this nine times wins the game. Scoring the nine goals usually takes about an hour of running, shouting, and swinging of hammers.

The actual play of the game is more complex than its rules would suggest, however. *Kómoroth* is like a ritualized form of battle, and though it is forbidden to wield one's hammer against an opponent, there is a great deal of bumping and shoving. It is truly exciting to watch the horse-folk gallop back and forth, moving to block their rivals when defending and seeking to drive through or around them when they go on the offensive. There are injuries, of course—bruised fetlocks are unavoidable when the hammers are swinging—but the centaurs are remarkably civilized about such matters. If a player is too badly hurt to continue, one of his opponents must leave the field also to

keep the game fair. Games seldom end with more than six or seven of the original nine players remaining on either side.

Before the match began, the team captains drew lots to see who would compete against whom in the first round. The first game turned out to be an unexpectedly easy victory for the blue team over the well-regarded green team, nine goals to five. The second, between the red and gold teams, was more hotly contested, but to the joy of their supporters, the gold team carried through, nine to seven. In the final match, the blue and gold teams met each other, and the struggle was furious. The blue team dominated for the first half-hour, scoring five points to the gold team's two, then added another two without reply as time wore on, driving the gold supporters to despair. After two injuries to their players, however, the gold team suddenly went on the attack, scoring four goals of their own before the blue team could respond. Finally, the two teams were deadlocked with eight points apiece, the whole match riding on a single goal. The shouting around the field grew deafening, and wagers flew back and forth.

At last, after a quarter-hour stalemate, the gold team broke through their opponents' ranks, stealing the ball unexpectedly while the blue team was pressing the attack. Caught by surprise, the blue team could only chase after as the captain of the gold team moved the ball back down the field, then knocked it into the blue team's goal, scoring the winning point.

The gold team's cries of joy shook the trees. Not only had they won, but their honor was secure. They would not end the games without a wreath.

It was midday when the *Kómoroth* tournament ended, and the centaurs took a long break to eat, drink, and smooth the field where the players' hooves had chewed up the turf. At the High Chief's behest, more spotters headed north and west, to watch for signs that the racers in the Seeking were drawing near. After some time, as the sun steadily westered, the Games resumed for their final event: the *Phellagos*, or Blade Dance.

The Dance is the only event in the Games that does not involve direct competition. Instead, it is as much

performance as sport, with each team performing a dance, and the best one being chosen by the Circle. Make no mistake, though—the *Phellagos* isn't just capering in the grass; it's dangerous to perform and exhausting to watch.

Traditionally, there are eleven dancers in the *Phellagos*, six mares and five stallions, one for each of old Lord Hyrtamos's children. They are by far the most agile and flexible among the horse-folk: I watched several of them prepare for the event, and they bent their human halves so far forward that they could have kissed their own forelegs, then back so their manes spilled over the rumps. This nimbleness is paramount in the Blade Dance, as a misstep could result in grievous injury, for one dancer or many.

The dancers carry sharpened blades including knives, sickles, swords, and scythes burnished gleaming bright. Fortunately the muttering storm clouds had cleared off without shedding any rain, so I could fully appreciate the spectacle of flashing bronze and glittering steel. There are few rules to the *Phellagos*, but chief among them is that no one dancer's blades may be at rest for more than a count of five at any point during the performance. They are, therefore, constantly spinning and weaving, thrown high into the air and tossed back and forth with precision that rivals Kryn's finest jugglers.

At the same time, the centaurs themselves are in almost perpetual motion, performing wild leaps and spins in time with the drummers who sound the dancers' rhythm. As the aim is to draw the Circle's favor, these leaps tend to be spectacular, bringing the dancers again and again within a finger's breadth of the twisting blades. I cannot count the number of times I tensed as the dancers ducked beneath razor-sharp scythes or dodged back and forth while their fellows flung daggers toward them, yet only twice did anything go wrong, and both times the resulting cut was so minor that it drew no more than a few drops of blood.

As with the *Kómoroth*, the order of the teams was chosen by drawing of lots. Each took about half an hour to prepare for its performance, then launched

into a flurry of jumping and slashing that lasted about ten minutes but seemed, to those of us who watched, much longer still. The crowd was utterly silent, none daring to make a sound that might distract a dancer and lead to disaster. When a performance ended, however, the field erupted in a storm of yelling and hoof-stamping from all the onlookers. The dancers would then bow to the Circle, lay their blades in the grass at the chieftains' feet, then join their cheering teammates to watch the remainder of the competition.

The blue team led with a fast-paced explosion of small leaps and flourishes that left me as breathless as the dancers when they were done. Following them, the gold team chose a slower, more stately performance: rather than relying on sheer alacrity, they worked their way up to leaps and tumbles that were by far more difficult and astonishing than anything the blue team had attempted. At the end of their routine, eight of the dancers were leaping over one another, swords spinning and clashing together, as the other three horse-folk filled the air around them with flying knives, until all came to a halt in a perfect circle, blades extended outward, toward the crowd. Watching the contrast between the blue and gold teams, I found myself unable to choose the better of the two, and wondered how the Circle could possibly hope to judge a winner.

Then the green team took the field, and it no longer mattered. The green team, who were favored to win the event, combined the speed of the blue team with the awesome stunts of the gold. I could not believe my eyes as, at the conclusion of their performance, they ended with four of their number actually standing on the backs of the other seven, all passing their blades back and forth in what I can only describe as an iron waterfall. I cheered with the rest of the centaurs as the green team went to pay obeisance to the Circle.

As it turned out, the finest display was yet to come. The horse-folk were still cheering the green team when the red team came forward and began to prepare. They fell silent, though, for it soon became clear that the red team didn't intend to do a simple, abstract

piece like the others. They were going to use the *Phellagos* to tell a story, the tale of the last ride of Lord Thymmiar.

Thymmiar had been chieftain of the Laughing Brook tribe and had met his end early during the troubles after the Chaos War. The enemy that the centaurs fought during that time was a renegade tribe of horse-folk whose chieftain had forsaken the Circle. They then waylaid Thymmiar and his hunting companions, slaughtering all save one, whom they gelded and sent back to Ithax to speak of the deed. According to the centaur minstrels, Thymmiar slew more than a dozen foes before falling, bloodied by countless wounds.

The red team—several of whom were, like Aphremas, members of Thymmiar's lost tribe—had chosen to present the already legendary battle as their Blade Dance. As I and the centaurs watched in awe, they acted out the hunting party and the ambush, then fell into a re-enactment of the battle that looked so real it brought gasps from many onlookers. Of course, none of the blows landed, but the illusion was still remarkable. As I watched, one enemy after another threw himself at the faux Lord Thymmiar, exchanged a flurry of blows, then fell back, dead or dying, as one of his fellows took his place. As the performance reached a crescendo, "Thymmiar" was cut down, and fell among his fellows, his sword flying from his grasp as he collapsed. One of his foes caught the blade smoothly, mimed cutting off Thymmiar's tail, then gathered his fellows and rode away in victory.

I confess I was weeping by the end, and beside me Aphremas—who had once hunted beside Lord Thymmiar—was inconsolable. Indeed, tears flowed all around the field, even among the chieftains. It was no surprise to anyone when Lady Eucleia stepped forward and declared the red team the victors.

By now the sun was nigh on setting, and still there was no sign of the spotters who'd ridden out to watch for the racers. The centaurs waited restlessly, tails twitching as one last round of wagering ensued. Much rested on whether Arhedion or Iomasseia would win the race: their teams were tied by this point, with three victories apiece. The red team also had three wins after

the *Phellagos*, but their racers weren't fast enough to threaten the leaders. The winner of the race would determine whether the blue team or the green team would end the Games triumphant.

The shadows of the trees grew long and the sky grew dark before the sound everyone awaited finally came. From the west, hoofbeats could be heard approaching at a gallop. After a few moments the spotters burst into the clearing and sprinted to stand before the Circle. "It is too close to name the victor!" they cried. "Iomasseia still lags behind Arhedion, but only by two lengths!"

That the race would be almost at its end and still so clearly undecided was unheard of. The centaurs' amazement lasted only a moment, however, before the blue and green teams—and those red and gold team members who'd wagered on the leaders—began to shriek the names of the two racers, working themselves into a frenzy. This carried on for nearly a quarter of an hour before the thunder of hooves sounded again, from the same direction the spotters had come. It picked up speed as it came: the racers could hear the cheering, and it drove them on.

At last, they broke into the clearing, sweat frothing on their hides. They breathed hard, tossing their manes as they settled into the track where the sprints had been run the day before. All that remained of the Seeking was a single lap around the field. Iomasseia had drawn even closer to Arhedion, but she was still a length behind, and didn't seem to be gaining any more ground. The blue team screamed wildly as they made the final dash toward the finish.

Then, as they came out of the final turn, Iomasseia made her move. She wasn't as exhausted as she looked; in fact, as I would learn after, she had cunningly opted to stay behind her proud rival, letting him set the pace and moving in his wake, pulled along by the breeze of his passing. At last, with the finish only two furlongs away, she pulled wide and passed Arhedion.

The red team's shouts of glee changed to curses. The green team went berserk. Arhedion laughed, seeing how he'd been tricked, and made one last try to regain the lead, but he no longer had the strength. Iomasseia crossed the line half a length ahead of him,

and took the wreath.

What followed was almost a riot. The centaurs, who had stood at the field's edge while the end of the Seeking played itself out, now surged forward and mobbed both Iomasseia and Arhedion. Those who had won bets shouted with joy; those who had lost spat on the grass, but grudgingly agreed that it had been a great race, as fine as any Seeking that anyone—even Xerbanion, with his vast memory—could recall. Of course, amphorae of wine began to make the rounds. The centaurs—all of them—drank to Iomasseia, to the green team she had led to triumph, and to all the athletes who had fought, run and struggled over the past five days. Lady Eudeia attempted a speech, but the revels had already reached a pitch, and those few who could hear her paid her scant attention. At last, with a shrug, she gave up trying, and the Circle joined the festivities.

The celebration lasted all night. It was much as before, feasting, dancing and singing, mixed with boasting of deeds done on the field. But that was not all, I discovered that contrary to all I'd been told about the Games, one event remained: the *Haselkia*, or Wine-Hoisting.

I've written enough about the centaurs' attitude towards wine, and their incredible capacity for it, to make the nature of the *Haselkia* clear. It is, simply put, the most fantastic drinking contest I have heard of in all of Ansalon, even more impressive than those that take place in Thorbardin when the dwarves bottle their mushroom spirits. It matters little to the Games overall—the colors do not matter, and the wreath-winner does not count toward any team's overall score—but it is still a well-liked contest, and the subject of much fast-paced betting.

The goal of the *Haselkia*, is to be the one who consumes the most wine. In addition, after every third amphora they drain, the contestants must recite a flawless verse of poetry from one of their people's many epics. This becomes increasingly difficult as the wine affects both the drinkers' memories and their ability to pronounce their liquid language without tripping over their own tongues. Even so, of the dozen centaurs who started the contest—spread evenly among mares and stallions—the first did not fail until

after his twelfth jug, and even when they reached twenty-one, six still remained.

Finally, however, even the sturdiest of the horse-folk reached the limits of his fortitude. Three of the remaining contestants dropped out at twenty-four amphorae, and a fourth at twenty-seven. At last, it came down to two: an older, white mare named Eibruxa, and Trephas, the stallion who had earlier won the wrestling competition. They reached thirty jugs, then thirty-three, then thirty-six, and still they remained tied, reciting their poems with only the slightest slur in their voices. At last, though, they reached thirty-nine, and Eibruxa stumbled over a particularly tricky passage. Trephas, who was still reciting flawlessly, downed a fortieth jug to make the number even, and took the wreath to much cheering from the onlookers.

After that, I fear, I remember little else. The rest of the centaurs began to drink in earnest, and once again, after a certain point the wine made the night a blur that eventually lapsed into darkness.

I awoke swaying, and it was a moment before I realized it was more than a simple hangover that made the world rock back and forth around me. I was perched astride Aphremas's back, and we were moving through the forest with the sun at our backs. My scrolls and inkstone were with me, in my packs, and Neothax was far behind.

I asked what was going on—not an easy feat, as all the wine made my skull feel two sizes too small for the rest of my head. "The Circle allowed thee to stay for the duration of the Games," Aphremas replied. "The Games are over, so by the oath thou took, it is time for thee to leave."

Such is the way of the horse-folk. Private creatures to the end, they had taken advantage of my drunken stupor to spirit me away. I doubt I could ever find my way back to Neothax through the forest without help. The rest is short in the telling. Aphremas bore me to the forest's edge, where he helped me down from his back and pointed me toward the lowlands. "Go back to thy people," he bade. "Write of the Games, and put thy account in your library. When the Hyrtath has passed, thou art welcome to return for the next

Games, if thou bringest a copy of thy chronicles for us." With that, he wheeled, darted back into Darken Wood, and was gone. Dazedly, I turned and headed back to my brother's farm.

I will return to Darken Wood, so long as there is breath in me. I will see the Games again, and when I do, I will write of them once more. Perhaps next time, Arhedion will learn from his mistakes, and will defeat Iomasseia. Perhaps not. We shall see, five years hence.

Talidus Pralex returned to Darken Wood, as promised, in 20sc, and brought with him a copy of this record. He wrote of those Games as well, and of the next two after that. Each time, he took his record of the previous Games as a gift for the horse-folk. He was on his way back from the Games in 30sc when he died. He was buried on a hill on his brother's farm. A year after his funeral, Brother Talidus's nephew found a simple gift on the grave-stone: a plain wreath of oak leaves.

Having studied Brother Talidus's work, it is my aim to travel to Darken Wood for the Hyrtamic Games in 35sc. I only hope the centaurs will allow me to follow in his path. With luck, and a good jug of Palanithian wine, I believe they will.

Gorlo Ethendan
Aesthetic of Gilean
Disciple of Astinus
Secundus Cataclius 32



Compiled by noted traveler and scholar
ISHBEL OF SOLANTHUS
Contributor to the Historic Archives

Despite their fierce, violent reputation, little has been recorded about the Khur people by scholars. Nominally a part of the territory of the great red dragon Malystrixx, Khur is not just one nation. Rather it is comprised of numerous competing tribes, survivors of two great wars, who eke out an existence and compete for resources in the bleak terrain of Khur. A proud people, they remain unbroken by the adversities they have faced in the past two or three generations, but their diminishing numbers may force them to move to other lands or disappear from Ansalon.

The people of Khur have changed little over the centuries. They have always been a nomadic people, moving from water source to water source and relying on hunting to provide the food they need. The events of Ansalon's past have had relatively little impact upon them. Before the First Cataclysm, the Khur were separated from the kingdom of Istar by a band of dry lands, from western Ansalon by the Khalkist Mountains, and from southern Ansalon by the Silvanesti forest. As a result, the affairs that embroiled other peoples passed

them by with hardly any effect. Thus were they taken completely by surprise by the First Cataclysm, which the Khur refer to as the Drowning, for many tribes were lost to the great floods that swallowed most of the land of Khur and Balfor.

It was no accident that in the Fourth Age Lord Ariakas of the Dragon Empire sought to bring the ferocious Khur into an alliance. He was only marginally successful, for the Khur are an independent people. Some of the tribes saw advantage in allying themselves with the Green Dragonarmy that took up residence in Khur and Balfor when it was ejected from Silvanesti. They saw such an alliance as a way to destroy their rivals. As is often the case in history, however, they traded one enemy for another. No sooner than the dragonarmy began to smash some of their opponents did they begin to levy certain requirements of their barbaric allies. These Khur realized too late that they had (ahem) a dragon by the tail. First, they had to give to their new "allies" a tribute of some of the best horses they possessed. Then the Green Highlord began to levy upon them control of certain water sources. These sources were critical to the survival of the green dragons that comprised the heavy weaponry of the Green Highlord. The Khur that had allied with the Nerakans soon began to hold these northerners in contempt, viewing them as soft and foolish. Their skills at warfare were based more upon the terror inspired by the dragons than any individual skill in battle.

Those who chose to remain independent of the Green Dragonarmy and its overlords in Sanction and Neraka fared little better. They were the targets of strikes by green dragons and rival Khur tribes. The Green Highlord was just skilled enough a strategist (or he was operating under orders from someone else who was) that he used his dragons to separate certain tribes of Khur to prevent any alliances from forming between previous enemies. Some of the independent tribes were completely destroyed by the vicious green dragons, their sources of water poisoned, and their swift mounts killed by the score. Located in some areas of Khur are small cairns of stone, all that marks the former territory of some of the tribes annihilated by the dragonarmies.

It was not until a young Solamnic Knight arrived in the region in 351AC that the Khur managed to throw off the yoke of the Green Dragonarmy, but it was a long, hard-fought battle, one that further divided its people.



Morgan di Caela came to Khur quite by accident in the year 351AC. He was on his way to Neraka, where he believed the Emperor Ariakas to be. In order to expiate a terrible dishonor he had done himself and his brother and sister Knights of Solamnia, he sought to challenge Ariakas to a personal duel and kill him, or at least restore his own honor in the attempt.

Morgan was an idealistic young Knight of the Sword who had just won his spurs. He and his small force were attacked by one of Verminaard's patrolling red dragons, and in the ensuing fight, Morgan ran, a victim of dragonfear. When he managed to master himself and return to the scene of the battle, everyone but his squire had been slain by the great beast. When he found his squire, the young man begged Morgan to kill him and end his pain. Morgan refused and tried to help the young man, but his cries of agony were too much for him to bear. He removed all his armor and piled it neatly on the ground near his squire. He removed his sword and lance and planted them there as well. Finally, he drew his dagger, walked over to where his squire lay, and began to talk to him of their home, north of Solanthus. As the man listened to Morgan's words, Morgan hugged his squire close to him and drove his dagger into his heart.

The next weeks were a blur to him, filled with tears. When he arrived in Khur, he was a broken man, who shied away from any but the simplest human contact. His only desire now was to remove the terrible stain on his honor by slaying the foul Ariakas so that he could die without passing on to his mother and brothers the weight of his dishonor. He wandered the western wastes of Khur for days. After several days of the intense heat, he had begun to grow delirious. Morgan was almost completely unaware of what was happening to him when he was captured by hunters of the Weyalu tribe and brought to their encampment. The tribe's eldest Seer saw the fate of her people tied

up with this man and forbade the warriors from harming him. She and her daughters tended to him until he was better.

He was treated with respect by the members of the tribe and given the name Kebra ("wandering star") by the old Seer. When he thanked her and told her that he must leave them to fulfill a promise, she simply smiled and said that his promise to himself would be fulfilled here, in this simple nomadic village.

The next morning, as he was preparing to leave, a patrol of Green Dragonarmy troops showed up to exact their tribute of horses. The commander of the detachment chose the horse of a young warrior named Turgis, and when the young man refused, the commander ran a spear through him. Something in Morgan snapped, and he snatched up a sword and beheaded the man in a stroke. After they overcame their initial shock, the rest of the patrol attacked Morgan. Warriors of the Weyalu leaped into the fray, and in moments slew every one of the dragonarmy patrol. Morgan himself had accounted for six of the score of dead soldiers. So ferocious was his attack that they looked upon him as an avenging spirit, sent here by the gods to help them throw off the shackles of the foreigners. Morgan realized that if the Green Dragonarmy were here, they would send a detachment out to find out what became of the patrol. He also realized that he could not abandon these people, for to do so would be to repeat his past.

So he stayed with the Weyalu, and in time other independent tribes began to follow "the Deliverer," the messenger of Kargath that their war god had sent. Although they never fought a single pitched battle against the Green Dragonarmy, their guerrilla campaigns tied up the Neraka army so effectively that for all practical purposes, the Green Dragonarmy was not a factor outside of Khur during the War of the Lance. They ambushed patrols, raided supply stations, kidnapped commanders and envoys from Neraka, and even managed to kill a dragon or two. They developed tactics for slaying dragons that denied them the advantage of elevation. They hid their camps (actually decoys, made to look like their travelling camps) in canyons and arroyos, and when the dragons came

swooping in to attack the "camps," the guerrillas attacked them from the tops of the canyon walls, using arrows, spears, and boulders. Crippled, the dragons were left to die in the terrible desert sun. Today there are hidden canyons that hold the bones of some of these dragons.

Morgan lived among the Khur for nearly five years. In that time, he came to be revered by the people of the independent tribes and feared and hated by the tribes allied with the Nerakans. The bounty placed on his head by the commander of the Green Dragonarmy was enormous. No one ever managed to collect it.

He nearly achieved a unification of the tribes that had not been done since the days of Keja-Khan, the man who united the clans of the Khur wastelands after the Drowning. He came to accept the fierce, passionate people of the desert lands of the Khur as his own. He married a daughter of the Weyalu, one of whom had rescued him. His son and grandson bear his surname as a mark of distinction, although neither knew the man who gave it to them. He left when his son Turgis was but a year old, promising his wife and his allies that he would return with aid.

In 356AC, Morgan left Khur lands to visit the Knights of Solamnia in the land of his birth. He sought to coordinate a series of attacks between the Khur, who would strike from the east, and the Solamnics, who would attack from the west against Neraka. He never reached home. His horse slipped on scree as they were crossing the southern Khalkist mountains. Morgan was thrown down the side of a steep slope. By the time he reached the bottom, he was dead.

The Khur of the independent tribes await the return of "the wandering star" still.





THE DIARIES OF
CHARDRICK AANKK

A renegade off-shoot of the Blood Sea minotaurs, the Kazelati first revealed themselves to the outside world during the Chaos War when they formed a temporary alliance with their imperial cousins. However, their clan-nation dates back centuries to when it was founded by Kaziganthi de-Orilg, also known as Kaz Dragonslayer, recorded to have been a companion of the legendary Solamnic knight, Huma of the Lance. Much remains to be learned about the Kazelati and their importance in larger minotaur society.





THE KAZELATI CLAN

The Kazelati minotaurs are taller than other minotaurs, perhaps by as much as three to four inches. However, they are also slimmer, with a build favoring nimbleness. Their features tend to be more angular, too, causing some to misread their expressions as distrustful or brooding. Their garments are simple, utilitarian, often dark brown kilts worn with tunics. Females cloak themselves in slightly demure but still functional outfits akin to those worn by male Kazelati.

Their preferred weapons are axes, long swords, and bows, although they are also proficient with lances. They are satisfactory on horseback, but rarely excel. In seamanship, few, even their Blood Sea cousins, can match them. They are fond of music and singing, especially lively or heroic tunes, and are very proud of their voices regardless of what others may think. Many minotaur mariners carry flutes or similar instruments on their long voyages. As with Blood Sea minotaurs, the Kazelati consider themselves superior to other races but treat outsiders with more respect and friendship than their cousins.

Young adult Kazelati sometimes journey alone across Ansalon, a rite of passage that pays homage to the historic life-trek of their founder, Kaz Dragonslayer.

The banner of the Kazelati also reflects homage to their founder. In a field of gold stands a silver, double-edged battle-axe, representing the enchanted weapon, Honor's Face, which Kaz wielded in combat.

HISTORY OF THE KAZELATI

The Kazelati draw their name from their founder, Kaziganthi de-Orilg, or Kaz, and his mate, Helati. A rebellious champion of the Great Circus of Nethosak, the imperial capital of the minotaurs, Kaz found himself thrust into the last and deadliest of the early dragon wars as a slave

soldier in the service of ogres and humans following the goddess Takhisis's warlord, Crynus. Disgusted with atrocities perpetrated by his ogre captain, Kaz turned on his commander and slew the creature. He then escaped, only to be captured by a band of goblins. Rescued by Huma of the Lance, to whom the honor-bound minotaur then swore his life, the renegade Kaz set forth on a new path based on the Solamnic code of compassion and justice. He accompanied Huma throughout the remainder of the war, fighting at his side despite the prejudices of others in the knight-hood. Riding dragons against the Dark Queen herself, Kaz learned the ultimate lesson as the young Solamnic Knight sacrificed himself in order to save Krynn from Takhisis.

Transformed by Huma's inspiring deed, Kaz traveled the length and breadth of Ansalon, trying to live up to the legacy of the fabled Knight. The shadow of his past dogged him, though, and more than once he came into conflict with his own kind, who saw his desertion as a violation of the oaths and traditions of minotaurs. Among those whom he encountered, however, were some who came to understand his ways, including the female warrior Helati and her brother Hecar. These were Kaz's first converts. The pair journeyed with Kaz and the kender Delbin Knotwillow for several years before Kaz led his small band to a region far south of the minotaur homelands and established his permanent home. Soon after, the first of his many children, the twins Kyrus (male) and Sekra (female) were born.

Word of his fledgling colony reached others discontented with the powers-to-be in Nethosak, and the new clan swelled in numbers. Kaz's colony, still with no name, pledged the ideals of true honor, which the minotaurs had sworn to uphold when they first created the twin kingdoms of Mithas and Kothas. The bitter years of minotaur enslavement during the dragon wars were fresh in the minds of many, and Kaz's colony seemed to offer a place to start over anew.

Conflict between Kaz's followers and Nethosak came to a head with the disappearance of Hecar. Seeking his mate's brother in the imperial capital, Kaz encountered treachery among his own race and, according to legend, slew the fearsome red dragon Infernus. Offered the throne of the emperor after this tremendous feat, the champion rebuked his former masters, departing not only with Hecar, but several others who had witnessed his triumph, including many sympathetic kin.

Hence the colony flourished, yet continued differences with their own kind forced Kaz to dispatch explorers to seek another, more advantageous haven. Eventually they settled upon a small chain of islands far southeast of Ansalon that had been discovered by a minotaur sea captain named Holak. Then Kaz's colony withdrew from contact with the outside world for the next several centuries.

Even the Kazelati tell varying legends concerning the death of the Dragonslayer, as Kaz became known after battling Infernus. The exact whereabouts of his final resting place is unknown, although some point to the islands of Sesta Kyri or Delbaras. Kaz's eldest son, Kyrus, succeeded him as leader of the clan-nation and was, by many accounts, the first to call himself Patriarch. The position of Patriarch continues to this day, but it was Kyrus who molded it, set the rules by which those who don the cloak of power must abide. During Kyrus's lengthy reign, the clan name Kazelati also became official, although its informal use dates back to his father's rule.

More of a scholar than his father, Kyrus also set into script the many laws which guide the Kazelati even now, thus earning himself the name Lawgiver. Like Kaz, Kyrus harbored a mistrust of magic-users and so forbade their existence in the colony. Only after his death, when his niece Verica inherited the mantle, did the minotaurs come to accept those few of their kind who demonstrated the gift. The new, female Patriarch (the title remains the same whether the Kazelati leader is

male or female) also raised up the capital of the island realm, Ganthysos, named after the Dragonslayer's father, who died battling at his son's side against the crimson leviathan.

Kaz, Kyris, and Verica are considered the three Great Patriarchs, so much so that little is known of many of their successors, save by Kazelati scholars. At some juncture during the middle of the Fourth Age, the decision came to voluntarily remove the role of Patriarch from blood succession, perhaps a moot point as many of the general populace can even now trace their ancestry to the Dragonslayer.

Like the rest of the world, the Kazelati suffered much due to the Cataclysm. Surviving records indicate tidal waves and storms of gargantuan proportions wiped out entire settlements. Ganthysos suffered a serious earthquake. For the first century after the devastation, the fate of the Kazelati was uncertain. Without the gods, the priesthood lost precedence. The first of the eminent wizards, Sutor the Blind, rose to prominence. His innovation was the creation of the shielding spheres, by which the Kazelati mask their island domain from the sight of foes, guaranteeing that Sutor's kin and disciples would forever have a voice in minotaur rule.

The War of the Lance nearly exposed the Kazelati to the world. In scouring the seas for minotaur to fill the ranks of their slave soldiers, the Dark Queen's officers happened on some Kazelati vessels and, in fact, came within range of the Holakan Islands. Although the islands themselves remained hidden by magic, the Kazelati launched a fleet to aid their beleaguered ships, sinking the intruders and leaving no enemies alive. Other vessels on trade routes were not so fortunate, and it is estimated that several hundred of the islanders were conscripted over the course of the war. Not one of them, however, ever revealed their true Kazelati origins.

Deeming the return of Takhisis to Krynn an affront to the legacy of Kaz Dragonslayer and the

knight Huma, the Patriarch Judar de-Toron sent forth watchers with instructions to interfere wherever they could, fomenting unrest among their cousins, eliminating sympathizers to the Dark Queen's cause, and locating lost brethren. Near Neraka, Kazelati instigated a short-lived revolt by minotaurs against their Dragon Highlord, which resulted in a costly delay for Takhisis's forces. Under the guise of Blood Sea minotaurs, their ships even dared to attack enemy vessels, although such incidents were rare.

When the War of the Lance ended, the Kazelati again withdrew to their secret domain, although they continued to maintain observers in Nethosak. In addition, with the return of the gods, the newly empowered clerics of Kiri-Jolith began a period of cautious but steady contact with a few select brethren of other races in order to better monitor world events. Still, few, if any in the outside world, ever realized the full scope of Kazelati existence.

At the close of the Fourth Age, the Kazelati revealed themselves—and their clan-nation—to the empire. Their arrival in Nethosak during the height of the Chaos War enabled both the Kazelati realm and the minotaur empire to survive, but the subsequent minotaur alliance with the Knights of Takhisis caused splintering among the race. Some members of the empire joined with the Kazelati, who broke all ties with their cousins after attempts were made by Nethosak to seize Kazelati ships stationed at the fledgling colony of Sargonath, located on the southeastern edge of the Kern peninsula. The friction between the two minotaur groups worsened over time due to other encounters.

THE KAZELATI REALM

Major holdings: The Holakan Islands (Sesta Kyri, Delbaras, Belkria, Paladus, and Jolithian) including Ganthysos (capital) and the settlements of Toron's Bay, Kazaris, and Humarak

Five islands compose the bulk of the Realm, as

the Kazelati call their clan-nation, but only three are inhabited by significant populations. Foremost is the the largest, Sesta Kyri, where Ganthysos and Kazaris stand. The island is roughly half the size of Mithas with the eastern portion the population center. To the west the land rises to form a chain of mountains that grows into tall peaks on the western coast. Known as the Guardian Range, the chain includes a volcano dubbed the Watcher by locals, because of the upper lava vents that resemble two wary eyes. The southern third of the island consists of forests and organized farmlands.

Ganthysos, on the very northeast edge of the island, is home to almost half of the realm's citizens. Imposing buildings of marble and wood with massive columns often adorned by the features of past heroes fill the main thoroughfare. The capital lacks a palace, as Kaz Dragonslayer eschewed such trappings in favor of an immense, circular auditorium where those who govern conduct public affairs before their people. High columns surround the exterior and twin minotaur colossi guard the great bronze doors leading within.

Although the worship of Sargonnas continues among the Blood Sea minotaurs, Kiri-Jolith and Paladine remain the gods of note among the Kazelati, even into the Fifth Age. Two temples built across from one another are Kaz Dragonslayer's tribute to his father, who converted to worship of the bison-headed Kiri-Jolith, and to Huma of the Lance, who, as a Knight of Solamnia, followed the Oath and Measure of Paladine.

There are four major arenas in the capital, equidistant from each other. Competitions of an athletic nature, especially running, wrestling, and archery, take place daily amidst the statues of past champions which line the upper wall of each structure. Unlike Blood Sea minotaurs, the Kazelati forbid bloodshed, save during criminal trials. Mental competitions, especially the

Kazelati version of Khas, also called chess—which includes two kings and an extra piece called the Champion on each side—also take place here. A focal point of their society, the arenas also serve for musical concerts.

The one other building of note in the capital is the grey tower at the very northwest edge of the city, the tallest structure anywhere in the Kazelati realm. Reminiscent of a Tower of Sorcery, it houses the training area for those with magical prowess. Built under the direction of the wizard Sutor, its sleek stone walls are windowless. Untouched by the Cataclysm, the tower is surrounded for some distance by ruins.

The capital's port is the largest, dotted by much of the realm's fleet. Shaped like a crab's pincher, the harbor is protected by twin towers in which are garrisoned elite units of the minotaur army and siege catapults designed to defend Ganthysos.

Ganthysos is home to the most powerful of the subclans. The four most prominent are Kaz, Hecar, Toron, and Agriac. Agriac controls much of the farm production, Hecar specializes in fishing, Kaz is known for metalwork, and Toron produces finished goods such as clothing. These and other subclans maintain their own fleets.

Kazaris, in the southeast, is significant as a military settlement, where warriors are trained and a constant force is maintained for action. A major fleet there is ready to sail to the defense of any portion of the Holakan Islands.

Second only to Ganthysos is Toron's Bay, the main population center on the island of Delbaras. Delbaras is a more pastoral area and Toron's Bay, named for Kaz's brother, an explorer, is an agricultural and fishing port, a center of commerce with ties beyond the Kazelati domain.

Belkria, named after Captain Holak's first mate and the third largest of the islands, is the location of Humarak. The land is rocky and fairly uninhabited save for the northern coast, which is the site of a massive quarry where marble is dug for

use in the capital. Humarak is the home of many stone workers, including sculptors, and of all places in the Kazelati realm, its design might be termed the most eclectic. Few tall buildings exist and most others are based on the individual tastes of local artisans. The marble of Belkria, which is highly prized, enables the people to thrive economically despite the harshness of the land.

Paladus and Jolithian, the two remaining islands, are relatively unpopulated, except for farmers, who raise vast herds of animals, especially swine, or grow crops. The landscape of both consists mainly of meadows or forest, much of it wild.

There are several tiny islands scattered around the region but these remain isolated except for defense outposts or the occasional adventurer. Most are virgin forest or meadow, others rocky, nearly lifeless expanses.

KAZELATI RULERS

The mantle of Patriarch nowadays is awarded by acclaim to a senior warrior or scholar who has previously held a position on the Council of Twelve. The Patriarch does not rule with the absolute power of an emperor, but neither must he, as does the ruler of the Blood Sea minotaurs, defend his position from all challengers. Instead, the Patriarch governs for life or until he decides to step down, although there have been exceptions to this general rule during politically turbulent periods. Decisions fall to the Patriarch, but are judged by the Council of Twelve, who place them into law if a majority concurs. The council and the Patriarch meet in private for most matters but once a month appear before the people in the great auditorium built under Kaz's rule. There, anyone who question their rulings may be heard. In this way the Dragonslayer made those who command accountable, something he felt neither the emperor nor Supreme Circle of Nethosak ever

had to fear.

The Patriarch officiates at all major ceremonies and gives approval of any state undertaking or expedition. In times of war, the Patriarch has ultimate authority, although the officer in charge of directing military strategy is drawn from the council. Ambassadors and representatives to other races and nations are also chosen by the council.

Below the Council of Twelve and also popularly elected are the Sentinels, fifty officers who govern the various districts around the realm. They, too, meet at special sessions where they offer up proposals that, if they show merit, will be brought up before the national council and, eventually, the Patriarch. Sentinels see to the day-by-day functioning of their districts, even to maintenance and policing. Sentinels also serve as militia leaders. They may also serve as subcommanders for major campaigns. Sentinels who do not perform their duties with distinction may be removed by vote of the council.

The Patriarch wears a cowed robe of silver trimmed with gold while councilors wear gold trimmed with silver. Both robes include the twin-edged axe symbol of the realm embroidered across the chest. Sentinels and their officers always dress in black kilts and cloaks and wear ebony helms protecting the eyes and the back of the head. They wear the Kazelati emblem in the form of a medallion on their chest or a patch sewn into their collars.

Since the time of Sutor the Blind, minotaur wizards have held an unofficial seat on the Council of Twelve. Their representative does not vote nor does he put forth suggestions of law, but he does make recommendations on matters already presented. He also must report on all activities taking place in the grey tower of Ganthysos, center of Kazelati magical study.

Disagreements brought before any governing official may end up being decided in the arena if the parties involved choose to duel rather

than accept judgment. Those who have committed severe crimes may also be sentenced to fighting in the arena. Such criminals may fight to redeem their honor or, if they have committed capital offenses, perish as warriors.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

The worship of the bison-headed warrior god, Kiri-Jolith, and his father, the platinum dragon, Paladine, remain strong despite the deities' disappearance after the Chaos War. The Kazelati not only believe in the traditions that the two gods represent, but also that some day the pair will return. In recent years a small segment of the population has come to revere Sargonnas, god of vengeance, in tribute to his sacrifice during the Chaos War. Sailors as a matter of course continue to give gifts to the sea, a practice dating back to the days when they sought to avoid the goddess Zeboim's wrath.

The names of recent, honored dead are called out at weekly ceremonies at the main temples. While no temple officially dedicated to Kaz exists, many minotaurs bring gifts in his name to the houses of Paladine and Kiri-Jolith. He is considered a patron spirit of all Kazelati sojourning far from their homeland.

TRADE AND COMMERCE

Because of their secretive past, the Kazelati have forged few longstanding ties with outsiders. Chief among those they have dealt with over the centuries are the Dargonesti, the sea elves. The Dargonesti barter lost treasures and food items harvested from the sea in return for various manufactured goods, especially metalwork and ceramics. Kazelati wine is also highly prized by the aquatic sea dwellers. Delbaras, in particular, grows a type of grape rich in flavor and texture. The two races also share a common interest in defense of their sea-tinged region.

In addition to the Dargonesti, the minotaurs occasionally trade with wild human tribes inhabiting nearby

islands and, under the guise of Blood Sea traders, human and ogre habitations on the eastern and south-eastern coasts. Wine and food stuffs make up much of the trade, although metalwork, especially axes, are popular, for Kazelati weapons rival dwarven work in the estimation of some.

Kazelati trade has increased in the Fifth Age, stretching into Solamnic lands. The sleek, swift vessels of the island realm have caught the attention of many and Kazelati shipwrights are able to command a high price for their services, although the Patriarch and council must approve all outside shipbuilding contracts. The Kazelati have also sent missions into kender territory, aiding those little ones suffering under the Dragonlords' reign of terror. The minotaurs feel this a matter of honor, as legend has it that the kender Delbin Knotwillow was many times responsible for saving the Dragonslayer's life.



Date: 25 Fleurvien, 362AC

*From: Hiram Obarne, Chief Archaeologist, Sesrocha Site, Subdept. of
Ancient History, Dept. of Research, Library of Palanthas*

*To: Supervisor Sirrel, SubDept. Of Ancient History, Dept. of
Research, Academic Branch, Library of Palanthas*

*Re: Current Status of Excavations and Preliminary
Analysis of Findings*

Greetings from the field, Sir!

All goes well at the Sesrocha Site. I think excavations here over the next few years will provide much information about the Ancient Bakali Civilization. I have included in this first report excerpts from my field notes for the first three months of excavations. I have also submitted a synopsis of research conducted at the Great Library prior to my entering the field. I must warn the reader that some of the sources are by non-library personnel, (and hence are not bound by the oaths of the Order of the Book) and as such must be viewed with some skepticism.

*Praise to Gilean,
Hiram Obarne*

SYNOPSIS OF LIBRARY RESEARCH ON THE BAKALI

(CONDUCTED DURING NEWKOLT AND DEEPKOLT, 362AC):

HISTORY

What is available exists mainly in the form of myths and legends told by the savage descendants of the Bakali, and thus is likely fanciful or embellished. Ernst Amundsen, a Pre-Cataclysmic explorer and armchair historian, describes certain aspects of the Bakali culture, such as their magic, in detail, but his sources are unknown, and thus the accounts cannot be verified. If there is any reliable translation of Bakali script, it may be lost to time, or languishing in the ruins of a Pre-Cataclysmic Library. Finding such a work would greatly advance study of the Bakali.

Their legends speak of the Bakali as being the first ones, the original children of the Gods. A race of lizard people in a time before mammals, when the planet was young and lush, covered in vast tracts of rainforest. It was in these prehistoric forests and jungles that the Bakali built their civilization. Great reptiles were walking the surface of Krynn and swimming its seas. It was a world truly alien to the Krynn we know. The Bakali civilization, they say, flourished for several thousand years at the close of the Age of Starbirth, rising, falling and fading into memory before the High Ogres were even given life. These same legends say that there came a Time of Ice and Darkness, when the Gods punished the Bakali for worshipping the first Great Dragons. Chislev and Sirrion, ever merciful, came to the Bakali and taught them the ways of fur and fire, that they might live to see the dawn after the darkness. After the Ice Age, the planet was new again, and the Gods created three separate races: Ogres, Elves, and Humans, forsaking the Bakali, the original race they had created together. Prior to the Cataclysm, people would have laughed at the prospect of the Gods punishing mortals for their transgressions and impiety. Now though, the idea isn't quite as farfetched or humorous.

The following is paraphrased from various volumes of the Chronicles of Astinus:

After the Time of Ice, the Bakali were reduced to a tribal state. They were tricked into serving the Dark Queen in the Second Dragon War, where many gave their lives for her ambitions. Following the war, the Bakali were hunted mercilessly, their small numbers being further reduced. They prayed to Chislev and Sirrion, their saviors in the Time of Ice, for help, so that their race might survive. Chislev answered the pleas of her chosen, but while the first of the more fertile Jarak-Sinn grew in their eggs, Hiddukel and Takhisis whispered to them, corrupting the new souls. This happened unbeknownst to Chislev, who sought only to give her favored the capability to survive in a world that hated them. The new Lizardmen were born, and as they grew, they turned to Evil and within a few decades, outnumbered the remaining Bakali.

When the Cataclysm occurred, as with the other races, the true priests of the Bakali tribes were drawn from Krynn. The loss of true priests turned the Bakali and the Jarak-Sinn into little more than animals. Again, they cried out to the Gods for help. Takhisis and Hiddukel, disguised as Sirrion and Chislev, came to their aid, for a price. The shadowy Gods called in the Bakali's debt in the Age of Darkness, before the War of the Lance, or Fourth Dragon War, as some call it. Takhisis, in the guise of Chislev, demanded that the Bakali wake her children, the Chromatic Dragons, from their long sleep. While the adult dragons gathered and prepared for the coming war, the Bakali guarded their eggs and raised the newborns. Hiddukel set other Bakali to stealing the eggs of the Good Dragons and exacted an Oath of Neutrality from them. Aside from this small, yet pivotal role, the Bakali have faded from Ansalon's stage.

There are very few Bakali remaining on Ansalon. War, low birth rates, and history itself have repeatedly conspired to wipe this first race from the face of Krynn. When true priests did return during the War of the Lance, the deceptions of Takhisis and Hiddukel were revealed. Most of the Bakali returned to the worship of Sirrion and Chislev, while the more numerous Jarak-Sinn began to worship the dark Gods openly. The true Bakali that are faithful to Sirrion and Chislev practice their faith in secret mystery cults among the tribes of the Jarak-Sinn.

MAGIC

These notes are taken from Lost Civilizations of Ansalon, by Ernst Amundsen, one of the most detailed sources about the Bakali:

"The magic that the Bakali wielded was from a time before the Moons existed, before organized worship of the gods. As such, they did not have wizards and priests as other races would. They knew of the Gods, but drew no power from them. At the height of their civilization, the Bakali wielded magic of unknown origin, shaping nature and living things to their needs. After the fall of their civilization, the Bakali lost their connection with early forms of magic, and during the Time of Ice took up worship of Sirrion and Chislev, the two Gods that had saved them from destruction. The revelation of moon magic in the Age of Light did not affect the Bakali. Their souls were forged before the three moons were placed in the sky." (270AC, Pp. 304-305)

Commentary and Supplementary Notes (12 Deepkolt, 362AC):

Amundsen writes of the Bakali magic as being granted by neither the Moons nor the Gods, something the Wizard's Conclave should be probably be consulted about. It is likely that the Orders of High Sorcery have written sources that would prove helpful.

TECHNOLOGY

According to Amundsen (270AC):

"At the height of their civilization, the Bakali had mastered sun-baked pottery, brickmaking, weaving, stone masonry, the alphabet, a numerical system. Their tools and weapons were mainly constructed from bone, horn, tooth, or stone, and in very rare cases, beaten copper. Because they did not have fire until after the collapse of their civilization, the Bakali were not capable of smelting, or producing advanced metals. The wheel was known to the Bakali but was used only in the cities, because the jungle paths were frequently washed out or overgrown. Travel between cities was more efficiently done by caravan, on the backs of the giant reptiles they had domesticated." (Pg. 256)

Commentary and Supplementary Notes (10 Yurthgreen, 362AC):

I am forced to tentatively agree with the work of Amundsen, based on observations at the present site.

References and suggestions for further reading:

1. Amundsen, Ernst. *Lost Civilizations of Ansalon, Volume 1: The Age of Starbirth—The Age of Dreams*. Kalaman: Kings Press, (Pre-Cataclysmic Source, Reissued 270AC).
2. Astinus of Palanthas. *Chronicles*. Library of Palanthas (various vol.).
3. Davinalis, Sherylintha. *Ancient History of Ansalon*. Silvanesti: Silvanesti Archives, 250AC.
4. Tylora, E.E.B. *Primitive Cultures*. Tarsis: Library of Khrystann, (Copy of Precataclysmic Source—approximate date 800PC-750PC).



FIELD REPORT: SESROCHA, A BAKALI CITY IN NORDMAAR

Site Status as of 362AC

The site is generally in a poor state of repair, which is understandable, given its age. In the eleven thousand years since the Bakali civilization declined, its cities, subject to the forces of nature, have slowly disappeared. Some have been collapsed by earthquakes, overgrown by forests, or submerged by floods. While there is no concrete proof of the "Ice Age" Amundsen describes, if it happened it probably destroyed many cities. The flooding, earthquakes, fires and volcanoes of the Cataclysm assuredly ravaged the Bakali ruins as they did every other culture.

At present, I believe that there are probably no more than five ruined Bakali cities on Northern Ansalon. The extensive climatic and geographic changes Krynns has experienced may also mean that Bakali ruins will be found in a variety of places.

The site presently being excavated is located in the tropical swamplands of Nordmaar, approximately two days west of Valkinord. These ruins are covered in vines, massive trees, and other jungle plants. The ground itself is soft and waterlogged, making our initial selection of a campsite somewhat difficult. The untrained eyes of the Nordmaaran populace likely had no idea that the hills throughout the swamp were actually overgrown or collapsed Bakali buildings. Were it not for the Library of Valkinord being alerted to the ruins by the merchant Panaso Sesrocha, (whom we have named the city after) we likely would never have launched this expedition to research it.



FIELD JOURNAL EXCERPTS

22 Brookgreen, 362AC

The city is wondrous, even in such a state. What a sight it must have been at its height! The ruins are barely visible, only rarely breaching the thick canopy overhead. The first task was to clear a campsite and select the teams for the various duties. Once this was done, we began a preliminary walkthrough of the site, the thirty-six of us walking abreast to plot a rough topography and do a surface investigation. This revealed some stone remnants, though much of what was found was buried in the soft loose soil. The tan-colored stone architecture found is covered with bas-relief, this being the apparent major art form of the lizard folk. The stonework itself appears to be mortarless, relying instead on precise tight fittings between stones and what appears to be a form of plaster on one surface. The artwork is primitive in technique, showing only profiles of the lizard people in somewhat static poses, but the level of detail is sophisticated. In art as well as architecture, the egg appears to be an important motif, perhaps as a symbol of life or renewal. Organized surveying and minor excavation of the site, to ascertain its boundaries, began in earnest today and should take several weeks to complete. Based on the few ruined structures visible, the city consists of many domed structures, rounded arches and conical towers.

25 Brookgreen, 362AC

Surveying continues. Several large structures have been found buried under jungle vegetation, but their purpose is still a mystery. It appears that the Bakali built their stone structures upon small hills above the jungle floor. According to some theories, Krynn was indeed covered in jungle and swamp during the Age of Starbirth. The mounds the structures are built upon might have formed a series of small islands, with the city itself being crisscrossed by canals, small lakes and rivers. Based on the bas-relief carvings unearthed thus far, I believe that travel within and between the cities was conducted on the backs of the giant reptiles that populated Krynn, and by a form of flat-bottomed skiff, a specimen of which we hope to find.

12 Yurthgreen, 362AC

We have uncovered many structures within the site, a large portion of which are in surprisingly good repair. The dominant form of roof seems to be the dome, all of which are tapered, giving the appearance of gigantic eggs nestled among the greenery. Not all of the domes are complete, but they appear to have been intentionally left open to the sky. Some of these structures reach one hundred feet in height. Many of the roof domes have a single skylight at the apex, with an arching frame completing the shape. The buildings found thus far have all been round in floor plan, and any windows and arches also are egg shaped. Any decorative features are at ground level, occupying a broad band punctuated by arched entry ways or windows. Decorations on the upper reaches, if they ever existed, no longer survive.

6 Flewgreen, 362AC

The survey is complete. It is almost two weeks ahead of schedule, thanks to the aid of a bronze dragon that spotted our crews from high overhead. The curiosity of this creature was apparently piqued, and it volunteered its services, allowing two of my somewhat apprehensive acolytes to ride it and conduct an aerial reconnaissance. I, myself, toured the site from the air, and must say that my earlier conclusions about the city being a collection of small islands was only partly correct. The entire city complex, as I was able to observe from the air, seems to be raised on a platform. This in effect means that the city was flooded only to a depth of a few feet, creating canals, as I thought, but also marshes. Further aerial examination revealed that within the marshy areas the soil was piled up into square plots, rising twenty feet on the sides. The height of these plots is equal to the high water marks found on many of the stone structures. I surmise that the raised plots were utilized for agricultural purposes, and that each time it rained, new soil and sediment would wash through the marshes, providing soil renewal, irrigation and waste removal. If this is correct, it was truly an ingenious harnessing of natural forces.

During the aerial survey, a ridge was observed that cut through the entire site from southwest to northeast. When ground exploration began, it was revealed that this ridge is actually a raised, fitted-stone roadway, almost twenty-five feet wide, supported by a single row of stone pillars underneath and a line of arch buttresses on both sides. In places it has collapsed, but there are still sections as long as one hundred feet, standing on their massive footings, almost thirty feet above the ground.

21 Flewgreen, 362AC

Exploration of the roadway continued today. At one end we found a bas-relief mural that, we believe, depicts its construction. The Bakali are depicted using the massive reptiles as beasts of burden, drawing wagons, lifting blocks of stone with ropes, towing massive, floating barges laden with stone blocks. The beasts are immense, some even larger than dragons. In other carvings, there are armored Bakali riding smaller beasts, with horns and fins, as we ride horses.

24 Flewgreen, 362AC

As the site is slowly cleared of the vegetation that clogs it, the conclusion I draw is that Bakali cities were essentially two-layered entities. The lower level consisted of crop plots, canals, docks for boats, stables for the large reptiles. The upper level, the islands and walkways, seem to have accommodated stables for smaller animals, temples, and public buildings. These conclusions are based on the art found as well as from inferences based on building designs.

CONCLUDING NOTES

There is much work remaining to be done at this site. Each days work raises new questions in the minds of the initiates and diggers. I believe that the Library should dedicate itself to a long-term study of the folklore of the Lizardfolk, which may reveal important information about the culture of this wondrous lost civilization. Why did the Bakali choose to build a city at this site, and where did they quarry their stone? These are great mysteries for future exploration. At present, I request that a second team from the Art and Mapmaking Departments be dispatched to join our crew to record the discoveries we have thus far made.

Brother Hiram Obarne,
Chief Archaeologist, Sesrocha Site, Nordmaar





PRESENTED TO THE SECOND ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM
ON THE ANCIENT CULTURES OF ANSALON,
14 Reapember, 371AC, the Great Library of Palanthas

By Andreas Lyonne,
Subdept. Of Ancient History, Dept. of Research (Palanthas)
and Hubert deMauss,
Subdept. Of Artifactual Specimens, Dept. of Acquisitions (Palanthas)

They were the children of the Gods of Darkness. A beautiful, proud, cold race. They were the first to walk the face of Krynn after the fall of the Bakali and to be close to the Gods they worshiped. They claimed the lofty mountain peaks as their home. In these mountains they built vast cities, controlling water and stone like no race before or since. The cities were architectural marvels, the buildings modeled after the mountains they perched upon, and built of the same cold gray stone. The great cities were destroyed during the wars that ravaged the collapsing civilization. At present, there are probably ruins of no more than ten High Ogre cities scattered amidst the peaks of Ansalon's mountain ranges.

These ruins give the explorer much information on the material culture of the High Ogres, but little else has survived to give clues about the ogre society. We know a significant amount about ogre tool-making technology and architecture, but comparatively little about such elementary things as the structure of the basic family unit. Looking to present-day ogres, who live in a tribal state, one could infer that their ancestors dwelt in a clan or house-based society. But there is little connection between today's ogre society and the once thriving empire that spanned half of Ansalon. Any similarities are coincidental, or conjectural at best.

What little information we do have about High Ogre society has been gleaned from clay plates roughly three inches square, which were found throughout the ruined sites. The surfaces of these plates have information carved into them in a precise, angular set of symbols. This symbol-set is largely untranslated, although linguists at the library believe many of the tablets contained lists of various types—inventories, cargo manifests and other tabulations. Some scholars speculate that this suggests an early form of language. Numbers, or a knowledge of mathematics, would aid in the creation of distribution networks, in census-taking, tribute and taxation, and in calculating the cycle of seasons.

The society of the High Ogres appears to have been founded upon three ideological principles—order, control, and permanence. These ideals, according to Balen-Strass (see reference cited), pervaded every aspect of ogre lives, and are expressed in their architecture and artifacts.

Order

To examine the layout of a High Ogre city is to understand order of the highest form. The streets are of standard widths and of measurement tolerances that reach tenths of an inch. The structures are uniform in design, layout, and grouped according to related purpose. Though the materials vary depending on each city, the roads and buildings in all are identical in style and method of construction.

Control

Water is the source of life. The High Ogres knew this and hence much of their civilization was centered around its efficient collection, and utilization. This philosophy of control was expressed in other aspects of High Ogre culture—most particularly, in the keeping of slaves, the domestication of animals and in the development of agriculture.

Permanence

Everything the High Ogres built or created, they intended to last for eternity. The sad irony is that they themselves were figures of impermanence, eventually declining and disappearing, while their cities, the bones of their civilization, live on. The ideal of permanence may also be manifested as a resistance to change, a factor that contributed greatly to their downfall.

HIGH OGRE CIVILIZATION

In time spent among the ogres of Blöde, (see *Lyonne 367AC*) cultural historians have learned some of their myths and legends. Many of these have been passed down orally, their origins lost to the current tellers. The interested reader is invited to examine *Lyonne's Strong of Arm, Strong of Heart: Myths and Legends of the Ogres of Blöde (369AC)* for some of these tales. Those stories are neither confirmed nor denied by the physical evidence. Historically, the only facts about High Ogre civilization that are known for certain are that they kept human slaves, these slaves rebelled, and this rebellion occurred at the same time the civilization began to implode.

ARCHITECTURE

The ancient ogres had a mastery of stone that would make dwarves weep in awe, but the structures they built were formal in their beauty. They were flat, austere, and expressed little vibrancy or emotion, much like the race that constructed them.

The buildings in High Ogre cities are generally square or rectangular in floor plan, have sheer, flat

exterior sides, and appear to be constructed of large sheets of gray stone. The tops of each building are pyramidal in shape, and contain drains leading inside. The angles of the pyramid sides are very low, as this shape encourages water flow at a manageable rate. Often, the slightly tapered buildings rise seven or eight stories into the sky, a feat that has proven impossible to replicate with stone in the millennia since. Windows and doorways are rectangular, and evenly spaced between corners, floor, and ceiling, an expression of the ogre obsession with uniformity and order. Ceilings and entryways are supported by posts and lintels.

Throughout the cities and the mountains where High Ogres once lived, square stone stelae, similar in appearance to ogre buildings, have been found. They are roughly six feet in height, and their four surfaces are identically inscribed.

The cities, being constructed on mountainsides, often consisted of terraces and platforms covering hundreds of vertical feet on the slope, with stone roadways connecting them. The city platforms were paved with identical gray slate cobbles, laid in an ordered pattern and dotted with water drains.

Perhaps the most amazing technical achievement of the ogre civilization was what has become known as flowstone. Throughout the cities, flowstone was used in a variety of ways for building purposes. Its uniform appearance and consistency hints that it originated as a liquid, possibly similar to plaster. Unlike plaster, however, flowstone is waterproof and harder than granite. Its survival for almost ten thousand years is a testament to its strength and durability. The loss of this wondrous material is truly one of the tragedies of Krynn's technological history.

HYDROLOGICAL ENGINEERING AND AGRICULTURE

Some argue that the pinnacle of High Ogre engineering was not their marvelous architecture, rather, it was their methods of controlling water. Reservoirs, causeways, cisterns, and even paving stones were arranged to direct the flow of rainwater. Control of

water was essential, as the ogres were agriculturalists and pastoralists as well as engineers. According to the few mosaics that have survived, they grazed their herds on high mountain plateaus, and built terraced fields on the slopes below their cities. Any water then coursing down the mountain could be exploited by the city, and because of gravity, could be diverted to irrigate the fields. (It is generally believed that the gnomes of Mount Nevermind learned of this farming technique after discovering ogre ruins in the peaks near their volcanic home.) Systems of causeways, often up to twenty feet in width, directed the water along the mountainsides and were shaped like inverted triangles when viewed in cross section. The flat upper surface of the causeways also served a function—as the roads of High Ogre intra-city commerce. The ogres placed cisterns, usually over one hundred feet across and seventy to ninety feet deep, at the junction of these covered causeways. Ogre cisterns were constructed of stone, generally cylindrical in shape, with the flat upper surface acting as intersection, trading grounds and military defense points. Some of the larger and outlying cisterns had structures built on top of them, these being used as forts for protection of the various cities. Within the cisterns, there were also multiple sealable chambers, platforms and forests of support pillars, as in the warrens under the agricultural fields.

As described, the ogres were masters of masonry, mathematics and engineering. They also possessed an alphabet, that we have yet to fully translate, pottery making abilities, and the wheel. Some carved glyphs and decorative relief found within ruined buildings suggest that the ogres also had begun animal domestication. In these pictures, a large beast (of a form unknown to present-day scholars of the Faunal Specimens Dept.) is depicted as performing tasks such as hauling or carrying. Though no wheeled conveyances have been found, mosaics also depict massive wagons and chariots being pulled by the unspecified beasts. Perhaps these ancient creatures fulfilled the dual role of the ox and the horse of our societies. In size, the animal is depicted as being taller at the shoulder than a High Ogre stands, but we should remember the tendency for mosaic-makers to exaggerate the

size of a creature based on its importance to a society. Mosaics found elsewhere show an apparently domesticated form of mountain goat. It is assumed that the High Ogres grazed herds of these creatures on the plateaus. However, until remains of one of these beasts can be found, we cannot say more.

ARMS AND ARMOR

In the ogre ruins studied, few metal implements have been found. However, based on new discoveries at the site of Asanos, in the High Khalkist Mountains (see *Julich 370AC*), the ogres are now believed to have been able to cast bronze, and at the time their civilization collapsed, small amounts of iron. Copper, due to its relative softness, was also used sparingly, for what little ornamentation this austere civilization required. Smelting complexes, of a scale that evokes the realm of the forge-god Reorx, are buried deep in the mountains, the only hint of their existence being charred chimney holes on the bare mountainside.

There is little known of High Ogre warfare, other than its existence. However, excavations at Imotena, in the Kharolis Mountains, during the summer season of 354AC uncovered what appears to have been an ogre armory (see *Dyceour 355AC*). Within the dig site was found several sets of armor, which are strikingly similar to early Istaran legionnaire armor, except designed for much taller people. Much of the material recovered was composed of bronze and beaten copper. The discovery of this cache of armor and weapons may be a hint as to the origins and inspiration for Istaran regalia. The armor bears little similarity to the standard plate armor that Solamnic Knights wear in battle. Instead, it consisted of a breastplate, greaves, a tabard, and helm. The breastplate was made of cast bronze, one quarter of an inch thick, and was secured to the tabard which covered the warrior's back. The tabard itself was composed of bronze scales, presumably sewn to a leather or linen undersheet, which was not preserved. The entire assembly is believed to have been hooked on the inner edge of the breastplate at the sides and shoulders. In order to protect the back of the warriors' neck, the tabard had a high bronze

collar, which hung to the rear of mid-thigh. The collar itself had a bronze ring, one inch in diameter and one inch wide. A codpiece and scale-covered breechcloth apparently covered the frontal groin and upper thigh regions, giving maximum flexibility, and protection. The greaves consisted of a plate of cast bronze, half the thickness of the breastplate, extending from just above the knee to the ankle. The helms were open-faced, but with a nose guard. They had mountings for a single narrow crest extending from the crown to the nape of the neck. Next to this longitudinal mounting, there were two circular mountings behind the ear holes, pointing backwards, one on each side. It is not known what was placed in these mountings, but it is presumed to have been some form of hair crest or trailing fur tail.

The strangest feature of the armor was a bronze cylinder, with strap holes on its sides. The cylinder, about four inches long, was closed at one end. The cylinder was worn against the small of the back, under the armor, its straps wrapping around the abdomen. In it was placed a pole, which extended upward through a gap in the tabard, passing through the collar-ring. The pole extended another three feet (estimated from the mosaic and the armor proportions) and had a one foot bar joined to it at a ninety-degree angle, which extended directly behind the warrior. To this was affixed a rectangular banner. The purpose of these banners is unknown, but in the mosaic, three colors are glimpsed: red, purple, green. As an interesting footnote, historians studying several different ogre groups in the mountains of Blöde have discovered a strong preference towards certain colors, among them red and purple. These groups had little contact with each other, and when they did meet, a group favoring one color would usually be hostile towards a group favoring another, while they were peaceful towards groups favoring the same or similar colors. The savage ogres themselves had no understanding or reason for this.

The High Ogres had knowledge of the bow, using a type that was often as long as they were tall. The handhold and notch for the arrow was closer to the one end, and based on the mosaic, this end comprised

the lower portion of the bow. Several types of arrow were employed, all bronze, many with broad, flat blades. Some arrows also had the centers removed, perhaps to lighten them for increased range. The arrows are crude compared to current elven technology, but presumably served their purpose well. The other major weapon the High Ogres used was the spear. It typically had a shaft of fire-hardened wood that was six to seven feet long. On one end was a broad, leaf shaped blade, while the other boasted a simple bronze spike. Several of the specimens recovered had barbs on the spike. The head of the spear seems equally well suited to slashing and piercing, and several of the specimens had open centers like the arrows, presumably to lighten their heft.

The High Ogre shield was large; the ones recovered often exceeded four feet in height. The upper surface was semicircular. The shield was generally flat faced, but slightly curved towards the wielder at the side edges. It was constructed of bronze and wood, between which was sandwiched a layer of leather.

Edged hand weapons were apparently very rare. However, there were many bludgeoning weapons, especially spiked clubs. Their popularity among the brutish ogre descendants now extant on Ansalon is apparently a remnant of their ancient past.

THE FALL OF THE HIGH OGRES AND THE END OF THEIR CIVILIZATION

The collapse of High Ogre civilization is probably the single greatest tragedy, aside from the Cataclysm, in Kryn's history. A slave revolt may have led directly to the collapse, but it could not have been the only cause. Rather, we now believe it was the merely the catalyst, or maybe even an underlying symptom of a society rotting from within. While we may never know the exact causes, we can infer some of them. The three most important might have been declining birthrates, resource shortages, and incessant warfare. A drop in the population of their masters could have played a significant role in the slave revolt, or in being unable to fight off invaders. Resource shortages might have brought on drought, or disease in the livestock or

crops. Without rainfall, an ogre city would be hard pressed to survive. A society would collapse into chaos as its citizens competed for food or water. Warfare could be the ultimate manifestation of chaos. Thus, wars between High Ogre cities probably became quite common in the waning days of the empire. With a population dropping due to lowered birthrates and constant warfare, the slaves would be able to rebel and claim their freedom. In addition, some ogres began to grant freedom to their slaves, some out of fear, others, such as Igraine, because of an enlightened mindset. This dismantling of such a key institution would undoubtedly have led to spiralling conflict, both within and between cities, thus hastening the decline and collapse.

Undoubtedly new rulers tried to suppress the revolts and bring the wayward in line, attempting to impose order. This oppression would likely have caused the smartest and wisest of the High Ogres to flee the cities. These beings eventually became known as the Irda, the reclusive, near mythical people who have sloughed off the trappings of the physical world.

The brutish ogres now found in the eastern lands of Ansalon are a sad shadow of their former glory. Where once they lived for centuries, now ogres live only a few decades. Where once they had cities, beauty, and refinement, they now live as tribes of hideous monsters in squalid huts. Where once they wielded magic and tools with unparalleled skill, now they lack patience and intelligence and are subject to the whims of the land, nature and fate.



(EXCERPTED FROM THE SOLAMNIC COMPENDIUM OF THE MILITARY ARTS)

The art of warfare advances more quickly than any other because success in battle means the difference between victory or defeat, life or death. Our own age has seen many innovations over the martial techniques of our noble ancestors. Steel is the common metal of war today. It is used in helmets, armor, swords, and axes. Formerly iron was the preferred metal, and in epochs past, bronze. No serious warrior would go forth today armed with a bronze sword or sheathed in a brazen cuirass. His life would be short-garbed in such apparel. Such is the way of progress in the military arts.

Likewise our modern era has seen the spread of artillery to the smallest armies, formerly only the great empires could field powerful engines of war. The catapults of our time tend to be smaller than the great machines of the Dragon War, the elves' Kinslayer War, the campaigns of the rise and fall of the empire of Ergoth, but they are more common and more efficient.

Before describing the different species of catapult, it might be profitable to ask the question, why build throwing engines at all? In warrior epics the valor of individual fighters is extolled and the deeds of great commanders celebrated. Therefore, where is the honor or glory in serving a machine that slays its foes at long distances, with no more feeling than a swatter mashing a fly?

To argue thus is barbarous and backward. The essential qualities of a warrior are strength, courage, and wit, and it takes all to serve a catapult in battle. To use the poets' argument against them, we might ask, why use steel when bronze will cut and kill? Why use bronze, when stone can rend limb from limb? Why use stone, when we have teeth to bite, nails to claw, and fists to strike with?

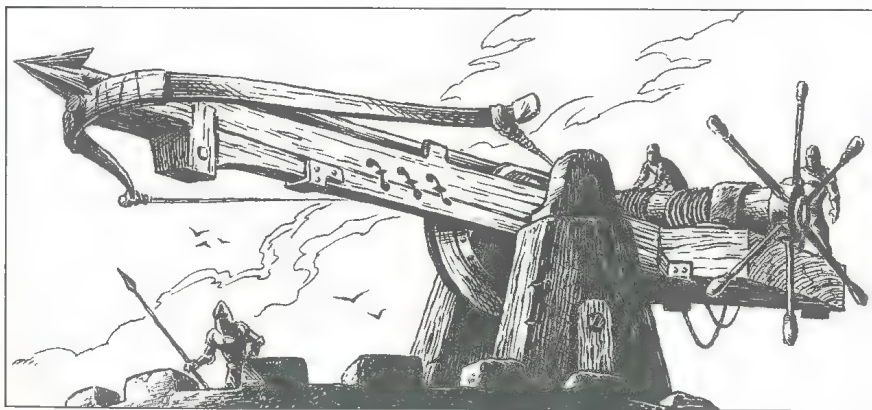
The gods did not make mortals of equal strength, stature, or wisdom (I leave it to the priests to reason why this is so). This being true, it follows that mortal beings whether men, elves, dwarves, kender, gnomes, minotaurs, or any other race, can by their knowledge create tools to accomplish those things they cannot do with their empty hands. A small man may resist the tyranny of a larger foe if he has a sword to defend himself. A hundred warriors with swords can defend a town, and ten thousand a city. When the foe is more

powerful still, say as minotaurs are to kender, the weaker side requires better weapons to equalize the fight. Because the world is full of powerful creatures (dragons, giants, ogres) and powerful armies, let each nation arm itself with the most powerful weapons it can possess. The catapult is the most powerful weapon short of magic known to mortal beings. With catapults, the walls of a great city may be battered down, armies decimated, monsters (even dragons) killed. This is the catapult's purpose.

BOWSTAVE CATAPULTS

The oldest types of catapult are the handheld variety. These exist in the form of bows, crossbows, and slings. These augment the power of a throw by lengthening the thrower's arm, or by putting a strength equivalent to many arms into the hands of a single warrior.

By the time of the Second Dragon War (2692PC), Silvanesti elves began building ballistae for the purpose of shooting dragons. History records the name of Calamanthes, an elven artisan said to have made a crossbow with a stave three paces long. It was mounted on a frame so large two ox wagons were needed to haul its components. This device, sometimes called a



ballista, was made of hardwood and bronze. The sear, nut, and bearings in the trigger were made of gemstone, which the elves excel in working. Calamanthes demonstrated his ballista to the great general Balif by launching a five-foot-long arrow across the Fallan River, a distance of 600 paces. The "Jewel Bow," as this machine was named, weighed 4,200 pounds and was too heavy for field use. It remained on a tower in Silvanost for some five centuries before it was burned by rebellious soldiers during the Kinslayer War.

The use of enlarged crossbows, which required oversized bows of wood for power, spread slowly outward from the elven example. The army of Ergoth employed a smaller version in the field, using a wooden bow one pace wide. These were mounted on wheeled frames, which could be pushed around the battlefield by teams of eight men. The Ergothian ballista was not so finely made as the elven model, but it fired faster, thanks to the use of a cocking lever that was permanently attached to the frame of the engine. After loosing a twenty-inch-long bolt, the cocking handle could be snatched back by the catapulteers pulling in unison. A well-drilled team could load and loose ten to fifteen bolts a minute until fatigue claimed them. This murderous rate was employed with great effectiveness against the dwarves of Thorbardin at the battle of Stonehammer Pass (2112 PC). It's said 600 dwarves were killed in the battle by ballistae alone. Because the Ergothian ballista only weighed 800 pounds, it was also frequently used on ships.

The giant crossbow style of catapult is limited in its usefulness as its size increases. The Jewel Bow of Silvanost, while powerful, was too weak for its size and weight. It and the Ergothian ballista could only fire javelins and bolts on flat trajectories. Attempts in Ergoth to build a stone-throwing ballista were not successful. The one piece bowstave got in the way of the missile. What was needed was a method of powering a throwing engine that did not require a solid bowstave.

In the coastal city of Palanthas, and later in the realm of Istar, there appeared a weapon known as the springal, or "spanker." This was essentially a device

like half of a large bowstave set vertically in a frame. Instead of using a bowstring to transmit force to a projectile, the bent springal bow struck the waiting dart directly, "spanking" the missile to its target. Springals are not very powerful, but they are light and were popular deck armaments on warships in olden days.

TORSION DEVICES

No one knows who invented the principle of the torsion engine. Its use is now so universal it is impossible to tell whence it came. Duncrane, scribe to Vinas Solamnus, asserts the Silvanesti discovered the torsion principle, but he was infatuated with all things elven, and gives them credit without due evidence. It is my opinion the device originated in western Ergoth where imperial engineers came into contact with the gnomes of Sancrist Isle (as we shall see later, the gnomes invented the third class of catapult too, the counterweight engine). The endlessly creative but scatterbrained gnomes still use torsion power today for such impractical devices as butter churns, boot polishers, and horseless wagons.

What is torsion? Simply put, it is the twisting force contained in a skein of cords. A torsion spring is made thus: take two wooden or metal discs with an equal number of holes bored around the outside edge and center holes for an axle. Tie equal lengths of cord through the holes from one disc to the other. Fix one disc so that it cannot turn, and begin twisting the disc on the other end. When the skein is twisted as tightly as possible, fix the moving end. You now have considerable power locked into the twisted bundle of cords. If an arm or pole is thrust into the skein, you can tap that force by pulling the arm against the torsion supplied by the tightly twisted cords.

The first torsion catapults are known to have been used by imperial Ergothian armies in the Kinslayer War. The Silvanesti and Qualinesti rapidly adopted this new arm and used it against the men of Ergoth—and against each other. The earliest torsion engines were single-armed catapults called mangonels. These consisted of a heavy rectangular timber frame, often wheeled, with a single torsion skein mounted hori-

zonally in the front. A long throwing arm was stuck in the center of the skein. Using a windlass, the arm was hauled down against the pull of the skein and held by an iron hook and eye. Affixed to the end of the arm was a scoop-shaped spoon in which could be laid any sort of projectile: stones, bricks, firepots, and so forth. When the hook and eye were separated, the arm threshed forward, hurling the ammunition in a high arc toward the enemy. Mangonels cannot shoot as far as ballista, but they throw heavier projectiles at a higher angle. This was very useful for lobbing things over the walls of a besieged city. Mangonels can be quickly and cheaply built, and today are the commonest form of catapult in use. In some armies the spoon or scoop is dispensed with and a sling used in its place. Engineers favoring the sling claim it adds distance to the throw, but building a working sling requires far more skill than it takes to equip a mangonel with a spoon. A wrongly made sling is as dangerous to the catapulteers as to the enemy. I have seen men slain by their own machines when the throwing arm did not disengage its sling and the stone missile flew wild. Slings seem to work better on counterweight engines, perhaps because the arm of a counterweight engine sweeps in a wider arc. The sling comes off its hook more reliably, and the arm swings its load in a much wider arc.

After the success of the mangonel, artificers naturally concluded they could get more power and greater range by building engines with more than one torsion spring. This was tried in different countries in different ways. In Ergoth they built catapults along the lines of the bowstave ballista but instead of a single flexing bow, they set up two independent, sideways-moving throwing arms. Seated on large wooden tripods these twin-armed ballista were some of the largest catapults ever built. Vinas Solamnius had in his artillery train a veritable giant, called by the Knights "Paladine's Pet." Twelve paces from bow tip to bow tip, "Paladine's Pet" weighed 3,750 pounds and could hurl an eighty-pound boulder 1,000 paces in good weather.

Not all of Vinas Solamnius's engines were as large as "Paladine's Pet." The typical train of artillery consisted of equal numbers of mangonels and two-arm

ballistae, weighing between 1,000 and 2,000 pounds. These commonly threw shot weighing thirty to forty pounds. The really large equipment was for siege use, as it was too heavy to move about an open battlefield.

During the Ogre Wars (circa 700 to 600PC), the Solamnic Knights used 140 pieces of ordnance to demolish the ogre strongholds in Khalkist Mountains. Their usual tactic was to send out a mounted force of Knights, which the ogres would try to ambush in a narrow mountain pass. The Knights would fall back, leading the ogres into a crossfire of fifty or more catapults. The ogre chieftain Ungrah, who stood nine feet tall and festooned his armor with the skulls of his 200 victims, was slain by a catapult shot. A forty-pound lead ball, launched from a two-armed ballista, struck Ungrah squarely in the face, killing him instantly.

The Solamnic engineer Wurgold began building a dragonkiller ballista in the year 353PC. Wurgold's dragonkiller used four torsion springs to propel a single gigantic arrow, twelve feet long, with a keen iron head and bronze fletching. As events developed, Wurgold's great engine was not used, as Dragonlances of ancient style sufficed to overturn the conquests of the Dark Queen.

In the elven realms, a different approach was taken to improving the shooting power of the catapult. In the seventh century PC, a Qualinesti elf named Parnithas Ambrodel, working with the dwarven smith Fordren Gamel's son, invented the "pelter," or volley catapult. In essence this was a very tall and wide mangonel with more than one throwing arm (four was usual). For a four-armed pelter, four thick torsion skeins were required, each skein powering one arm. Once the skeins were ratcheted to their highest tension, the throwing arms would be drawn back by windlasses and locked into place for firing. A multiple trigger hook was invented by Fordren Gamel's son, which used four hooks mounted on a single iron bar. The bar was locked to the engine's frame. Each hook could pivot to the right, and each had an eyelot on it through which a lanyard could be threaded. Once the pelter was cocked and loaded the catapulteer in command could stand a safe distance away, and by yank-

ing the lanyard, loose all four arms at once.

Because the pelter used such short skeins, it was not as powerful as the Solamnic two-arm ballista. The elves compensated for the weaker throw by increasing the volume of missiles and by using leaden shot instead of stone. Lead is both harder and heavier than common stone, and inflicts more hurt when it strikes. A battery of six pelters could hurl seventy-two lead balls per minute. On the parapets of Qualinost there sat a pelter with no less than eight arms. It was dubbed "Silveran's Spider," after the reigning Speaker of the Sun.

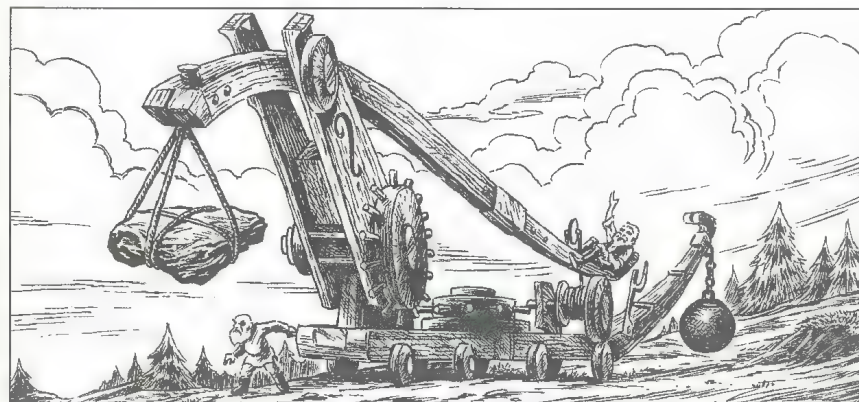
No one but the elves persisted in building pelters. The engines were complicated, hard to build, and not very accurate in casting their shot. This was not a problem when faced with a mass of enemy soldiers, but the other armies of Ansalon favored engines that could hit a chosen target, rather than fling large numbers of missiles at it.

COUNTERWEIGHT CATAPULTS

Counterweight engines are the only form of catapult whose exact origin is known. The gnomes of Sancrist Isle are inveterate inventors, always cobbling together some new device (often for a task done more simply by hand). After the terrible Cataclysm claimed

Istar, travelers to Sancrist came back with tales of a potent new device used by the gnomes. They called it a "gnomeflinger," and it was not a weapon of war. Within the hollow core of Mount Nevermind the gnomes found it inexpedient to travel about the interior of their cavern by means of ladders, steps, and bridges. A gnomish engineer (whose name I know, but will not inflict on you, noble reader, so lengthy is it) had the notion that as acrobats can vault into the air by means of a teeter-totter, so too could gnomes be lofted to their desired destination by an enlarged, more powerful, and more controlled version of the acrobat's tool. The gnomeflinger basically consists of a long throwing arm, balanced on a tall frame so that two thirds of the arm are on one side, and one third of the arm on the other side of the fulcrum. A large, heavy weight is attached to the short side of the arm, and the gnome passenger sits in a chair provided on the opposite end. On command, the anchor holding down the chair is released, the counterweight swings down, and the gnome is lofted to his destination or death.

The gnomes burden their flinger with many refinements unnecessary to an instrument of war, but the principle of a counterweight engine caught on quickly. Unfortunately, the eagerest adherents of the new engine were the dragonarmies. Mighty counterweight



catapults were used in the capture of Kalamán and Vingaard. Called trebuchets in Solanthus, the counterweight engines were simple in principle and easy to build. They were immobile structures, however, of use only in a static siege. Power and range depended on the height of the vertical beams and the size of the counterweight. The Blue Dragonarmy's fearsome trebuchet "Dark Queen's Salute" stood forty feet tall, and could lob a hundred-pound boulder over a high castle wall from 200 paces.

The tactical weakness of trebuchets lay in their slow rate of fire and their immobility. Once a trebuchet is loosed, the enormous beam threshes skyward, launching its missile from a great sling. To reload, the beam must be drawn back down against the massive burden of the counterweight. Even modestly sized trebuchets, like the twenty-two-foot-tall models used by Gunthar uth Wistan at the relief of Estwilde (353 AC), could only launch one boulder every six minutes. During the campaign to evict the dragonarmies from the northern Solamnic plain, Qualinesti catapulteers (using bowstave ballistae of the old Ergothian pattern) annihilated the ponderous siege train of the Blue Dragonarmy, which consisted of some eighty-nine large trebuchets.

Trebuchets remain the standard heavy siege engine for all Ansalon armies.

CRANES AND PENDULUMS

The least used family of war engines are the cranes and pendulums. Because they are stationary devices, they are only of use in sieges. Moreover, unlike catapults, which fling missiles at the enemy, cranes and pendulums must be brought into close contact with the foe, making them very dangerous machines for their operators.

Cranes are most used by the defenders of a walled city under attack. The crane rises from behind the curtain wall and extends over the defenses. From its lofty perch the crane lowers giant pincers or grappling hooks. Its purpose is to seize enemy engines (siege towers, battering rams) and haul them into the air. Once dangling at a shocking height, the attacking

machines are dropped to the ground and dashed to pieces. Pincers are sometimes used in harbors to grab and lift enemy ships.

In 347AC, the celebrated pirate Artavash led a fleet of sixty galleys against Palanthas. The pirates routed the Palanthine squadron arrayed against it, but came to grief on the formidable seaward defenses of the city. Cranes on the harbor mole grappled and caught no less than sixteen pirate galleys, hoisting them and emptying their crews out like baby birds tumbling from a windblown nest. Artavash retreated from Palanthas, later using her fleet to capture the island of Kernaif, which she ruled from some years.

Pendulums are cranes fitted with weights instead of hooks. Once a boom is swung over the defender's wall, the weight is dropped on the attacker's tower or ram. By rigging the weight with rope and tackle, the attack can be repeated as many times as needed. No belfry or ram can resist such measures, except by expeditious withdrawal.

The elven engineer Calamanthes describes an offensive pendulum in his treatise *Engines, Catapults, and Fortifications*. From a rolling tower (like the common belfry), Calamanthes suggests fitting a boom equipped with a leaden weight. While closing in on the besieged wall, the weight is released to swing forward and down against the parapet. Such a blow would be very destructive to wall and defenders, but Calamanthes's belfry pendulum has never been employed in warfare, to my knowledge. Its great weakness is that it must be pushed quite close to the enemy's wall, a difficult feat, and maintained there against the vigorous defense.

TYPES OF MISSILES

The common ammunition of catapults is either large arrows, or bolts, or masses of stone.

Bowstave ballistae work best with arrows made like oversized crossbow bolts. The iron head should be mounted perpendicular to the fletching since the fletching must be horizontal in order allow the missile to lie flat in the ballista slot, this means the head will be attached vertically to the shaft. This enables the bolt to fly straight and true.

Bolt shafts can be made of any straight grain hardwood. Ash is the best, though oak is preferred in the eastern countries, and cedar in mountainous dwarven lands. The flights can be stiff leather, bronze, or even papier maché in times of shortage.

Boulders, roughly shaped into globes, are the common ammunition of mangonels and trebuchets. Hard, heavy stones, like granite, make excellent missiles, but granite is seldom used because it is so hard to work into shape. Most armies in the field scrounge for whatever stone is local, but careful commanders will lay in a supply of granite whenever they can.

City garrisons favor brick or concrete missiles. Such loads can be crafted to any size or shape, and their fragmentary nature makes them highly effective against masses of attacking infantry. Regardless of how they are made, a sphere is the best shape for missiles. A sphere flies truer than a block.

Warships often resort to firepots. A clay vessel of appropriate size, equipped with a lid, is filled with oil, sulfur, and pitch. The mixture is lighted, the loose fitting lid put on, and the firepot is hurled at the target. When it shatters, it spreads burning oil all over. Firepots and incendiary arrows can be used against cities, but most garrison commanders know enough to tear down and remove flammable buildings that lie in the range of the enemy's artillery.

Noxious and noisome materials may be delivered by catapult. Sometimes dung or offal is loaded into pots and thrown at the enemy, as an irritation. Dead and rotting animals are likewise tossed into besieged places, to start disease among the inhabitants. Wise commanders burn any carcasses they receive in this manner. In stranger encounters, live creatures have been used as missiles. Wicker baskets of vipers were used in the sea battle off Cape Istar (92PC). Galley rowers were discomfited by a rain of venomous snakes, and the Istarian navy lost the battle to the weaker Silvanesti fleet. These are mere tricks, however.

Occasionally one reads of prisoners being thrown over the walls of an invested town. This cruelty is meant to dishearten the defenders. However, should a circumstance arise where a live captive needs to be delivered in such a fashion, mark that it is necessary to

tie the victim's arms and feet. Kicking and flailing of the limbs will spoil the trajectory.

At least one person has survived his own bombardment. During the fight before Kalamán, the Blue Dragonarmy captured a Solamnic scout by the name of Darren uth Gaenur. Darren's mission was to scout the western flank of the Blue Dragonarmy, but he was caught in short order by a draconian patrol. Sentenced to die, he was sewn in a leather sack and loaded into one of the army's giant trebuchets. The evening was quite windy, and when launched, the breeze helped Darren clear Kalamán's outer wall and carried him to the roof of a house. The roof sloped with his path, and he tumbled top over toes until he reached the gutter. He fell two stories into an open rain cistern and survived with only splinters in his scalp and posterior, souvenirs of his roll across the wood-shake roof.

MATERIALS FOR MAKING CATAPULTS

Bowstave catapults are generally made of the same materials as crossbows, that is, good bow wood such as yew, reinforced with laminates of steer horn and sinew. Some armies, notably the Silvanesti, have made bowstave engines with bronze or steel bows. Bronze weakens with use and breaks sooner than wood. Steel proved excessively hard to bend with conventional windlasses, resulting in engines that were slower to load and fire than wooden models. Bowstrings do not last long when used with steel bows.

Bowstrings are woven from flax or hemp, eighty to a hundred strands per string. Beeswax and pine resin are added to keep the bowstring's weave tight. The ends of bowstring are whipped with silk cord, or clamped with iron staples. Elven bowstrings have been found with gemstone tighteners. Carved from carnelian or jade, the tighteners have screw threads on their outside. They bear against knots or knobs woven into the string, and by screwing the tightener into the frame, tension can be restored to slack bowstring.

Torsion springs are difficult to make and finicky in their performance. Many have tried to use cords of cheap hemp or flax to make catapult skeins, but the

fibers lacked the proper resilience. The best torsion springs are made from hair and sinew, braided together and oiled to maintain their elasticity. Human hair works well, as do the manes and tails of horses. Steer sinew provides an excellent core around which hair braids are woven.

In more recent eras, dwarven smiths have tried to temper metal springs sufficiently to power throwing engines, from hand-sized up to giant two-arm ballistae. Sword steel shows promise as spring metal, but to date, no metal powered engine can compete with the best torsion catapult. Metal fatigues, loses its temper, and once out of tune, cannot be restored. Torsion springs can be loosened, rewound, and returned to service quickly. Palanthine engineers, with their wide access to sea creatures, have done promising work with the sinew of sea serpents and whalebone, but these materials are too rare and delicate to find favor in catapults built far from the sea.

CATAPULTS AND MAGIC

There is a story, perhaps only a kender tale, of a contest between the sorcerer Mandes and the engineer Elicarno. Both were subjects of the Emperor of Ergoth. Mandes was renowned for his weather spells, and particularly his command of lightning. Blue fire played about the peaks of his towered manse night and day, and many lived in fear of the sorcerer's glance, lest they be struck dead by a bolt from the blue.

Elicarno was a far different sort. He was not yet thirty, the youngest fellow to receive his mastership from the Imperial Academy. The invention that earned Elicarno his master's cap was the permanent cocking lever for bowstave ballistae. It was this innovation that won the short war against Thorbardin for the emperor, and earned Elicarno the rank of Imperial Councilor.

Mandes, by this time quite old, was very jealous of the upstart engineer's success. For fifty-nine years the sorcerer had stood high in court favor, serving two emperors as councilor and thaumaturge. Elicarno and his followers proclaimed the overthrow of magic in

favor of mechanics, predicting that in the future machines would do all the things then done by sorcery. Mandes took grave exception to these boasts, and challenged Elicarno to a duel. The two men met face to face for the first time in court, before the high throne of Ergoth. Mandes was resplendent in robes of gold cloth and a cap of lapis lazuli on his head. He was leaning on an oaken staff two paces tall, inlaid with arcane symbols wrought in silver and amber. Elicarno appeared in a stained leather vest and trews, his face smudged with soot and grease.

High words ensued, and only the threat of the emperor's displeasure prevented the two antagonists from coming to blows. A date was set for the duel, in a chosen field outside the city. The emperor did not want either of his valuable servants harmed, so the contest became one of destructive skill against an unfeeling, unliving target.

Two stout wooden posts were erected in the field, two hundred paces from the contestants, and fifty paces from each other. Mandes arrived in a coach drawn by tame griffins, gifts of the Speaker of the Stars (Mandes once disposed of a troublesome rival enchanter for the Silvanesti monarch). Elicarno took the field at the head of forty-two apprentices, with six wagons laden with timber, rope, and other supplies. When the High Chamberlain dropped his perfumed handkerchief to the ground, the contest began.

Mandes pressed his palms together and began intoning a mighty conjuration. Elicarno shouted orders, and his students fell to assembling a bowstave ballista. In short order the catapult was knocked together and trained on the distant target post. Just as Elicarno slipped the first of a cartload of bolts into the engine, a black cloud appeared overhead. Mandes's droning incantation became a shout, and a spear of livid fire lanced down from the cloud, striking the ground beside the post. There was a deafening roar, and the assembled courtiers quailed. When everyone's eyes adjusted to plain sunlight again, they could see Mandes's lightning had scorched his target to a charred stump.

Elicarno bowed to his opponent, then lined up his apprentices. At the command, "Loose!" they launched a missile at the post. It struck the ground just short of the target. Under Mandes malevolent smile, Elicarno calmly adjusted the elevation of his piece and loosed again. The four-foot-long bolt rammed its iron head through the center of the post. Satisfied, Elicarno cried, "Rapid, commence!"

With one team of apprentices working the cocking lever and another group loading the hungry ballista, Elicarno loosed eighty missiles in just three minutes. He reduced his target to splinters, and when he finally called for his men to cease, no part of his target remained visible above the ground.

The emperor of Ergoth rose from his sedan chair and walked to the targets. He inspected both, trailed by his chamberlain, bodyguards, and courtiers. When he returned, he declared Elicarno the winner.

"But why, great Majesty?" demanded the wizard. "I struck first, and destroyed my target before this young whelp first unleashed his gimcrack weapon!"

The emperor regarded Mandes with a cool, unsympathetic eye. "Strike again, O Mandes," he said. "Call down the lightning and remove even the burnt remains of your target."

Mandes blinked. "As your Majesty commands. It will take a few moments—"

The emperor whirled and thrust a finger at Elicarno. "Destroy the wizard's target!"

Elicarno's men levered the ballista around until the sights were aligned with the charred stump. The engineer loosed a dozen bolts, pulverizing the stump before Mandes had even finished the first iteration of his spell.

"That is why he won," said the emperor. "My forces must be ever ready to strike, and strike hard. No enemy is going to wait for his foe to make ready to defend or counterattack. Magic is a powerful tool, O Mandes, but on the battlefield, it must give way to machines."

Mandes, mortified by his rejection, returned to his griffin coach and took to the sky. He left Ergoth, never to return, taking up residence in the high moun-

tain northeast of Palanthas. There he caused much woe for the emperor, until he was slain by the Ergothian hero Toland.

But that's another story. Here ends the treatise on catapults.



AUTHOR UNKNOWN

*DISCOVERED IN THE PAPERS OF LORD GUNTAR,
believed to be part of a report delivered to him by a high-
ranking officer in the Knights of Neraka (formerly Knights of
Takhisis) who is, in fact, a double-agent.*

The armor of the Knights of Neraka is perhaps the finest armor thus far developed. It was specially designed to fit the exacting standards of the High Commander of the Knights of Takhisis, Lord Ariakan. For years before designing this armor, Ariakan studied the armor of the Dragon Highlords and the Solamnic Knights. The Takhisian armor designed by Ariakan is a combination and evolution of the best armors of Krynin history.

ARIAKAN'S BACKGROUND

During the War of the Lance, the forces of good defeated the evil dragonarmies. The victorious Solamnic Knights captured many evil warriors in the final battles of the war. Perhaps the most highly prized captive was a young warrior named Ariakan,

who was the son of the Commander of the evil Dragonarmies, Highlord Ariakas and the sea Goddess Zeboim. Ariakan, who had grown up amongst his father's troops, even sometimes fighting at the Dragon Highlord's side, was a fierce fighter, who, once captured, resolved to learn all that he could about his captors.

Ariakan was held prisoner in the High Clerist's Tower for several years. The Solamnic Knights, eager to indoctrinate and perhaps even convert their young captive, zealously taught Ariakan all he wanted to know. Ariakan studied hard and learned everything knightly, from grand concepts such as the Oath and the Measure to more commonplace subjects such as discipline and the design of Solamnic armor.

The Solamnic Knights were encouraged by Ariakan's enthusiasm. He seemed a model prisoner, his natural intelligence and charisma leading everyone to hope he might change his faith and someday become a Solamnic Knight himself.

Ariakan was in his mid-twenties when the Solamnics finally let him go. To the disappointment of all who'd taught him, he quietly left and disappeared into the countryside. Ariakan's secret plan was to form a new and stronger order of evil knights. With the blessings of the goddess Takhisis, Ariakan began recruiting young men. He called his new recruits the Knights of Takhisis.

Ariakan loosely based his new knighthood on the knowledge he'd gained by studying and (in his view) improving upon Solamnic ideals. Thus, when it came time to equip his young knights for battle, Ariakan used Solamnic armor as his basic uniform, but changed details to make the armor lighter, more durable, more protective.

It is interesting to note that Ariakan chose the metal plate armor of the Solamnic Knights (see Figure 1) instead of the highly touted Dragonscale Armor previously used by his father and the forces of evil. Rumors persist that this was due to several evil dragons who voicing their repulsion at seeing humans and their ilk dressed in dragonlike scales. This is of course unlikely, since scale armor is one of the oldest defenses known to man, dating as far back as the Age

of Light (circa 3500PC). More likely, Ariakan's decision to eschew dragonscale armor was based on his recognition that Solamnic plate armor, at its height of craftsmanship, was simply the stronger covering and the best foundation on which to build.

THE CONSTRUCTION AND USE OF TAKHISIAN ARMOR

The Arming Doublet. A suit of armor consists of approximately twenty separate pieces. The basic shirt-like garment is called an arming doublet. It's a thick, padded shirt, made of heavy material or leather, worn under the armor to keep a knight from chafing or bruising. The padded doublet also cushions against direct enemy blows. The doublet is always laced up the front. Some of these doublets have an upraised collar that buckles securely at the neck.

Strong leather thongs hang from the arming doublet. These thongs (also called points) are used to fasten different parts of the metal plate armor so it doesn't slide around or slip off during movement. The thongs are often fitted with metal tips to keep the ends from fraying.

Three sections of chain mail (interlinked wire circlets) are stitched to every arming doublet. One piece of chain mail circles the lower throat below the collar and two pieces of chain mail (called gussets) extend down the arm. These chain mail pieces protect the gaps left wherever plate armor gives way for freedom of movement.

Attaching chain mail to the doublet was arguably one key improvement. Solamnic Knights wear a full shirt of chain mail over their doublet and under their metal plate armor. A full chain mail shirt is somewhat heavy—about twenty-eight pounds—weighing down on the shoulders and taxing a Knight's stamina. Unlike their Solamnic counterparts, the Knights of Neraka wear only small chain mail gussets to bridge strategic gaps, and this lightens the overall burden considerably.

Elven chain mail is regarded as superior by some, for it is purported to have magical properties that make it stronger and lighter. Elves are often depicted

in paintings and tapestries wearing little more than a full chain mail shirt, with a surcoat or brigandine on top. While this type of gear is probably quite comfortable and facilitates movement, this elven chain is known to be quite expensive and difficult to obtain in quantity for an army—especially a non-elven army. Thus an arming doublet with small chain mail gussets provides a less expensive alternative.

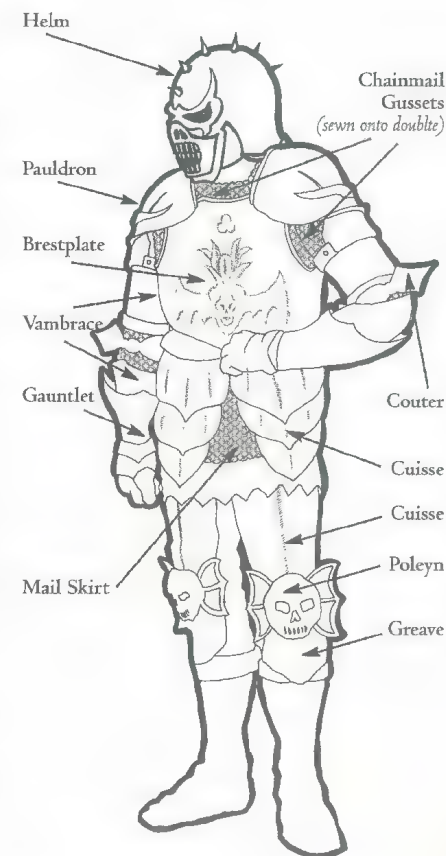
Leg Defenses. During the War of the Lance, both the Solamnic Knights and the Dragon Highlords wore heavy chain mail leggings (called chausses), reinforced in front with schynbalds and thighbalds.

Historically, both Solamnic and Dragonarmy chausses have consisted of two individual leg pieces, which fit snugly and are gartered or tied below the knee for extra support. To keep the heavy chausses from falling down they are also tied to a waist belt or laced to strings hanging down from a padded doublet. Narrow, gutter-shaped pieces of steel known as schynbalds and thighbalds are then simply strapped over the chausses and boots.

Ariakan's main innovation here was to omit the chausses and encase more of the leg with steel plates—which better guard against concussive injuries such as severe bruises and broken bones. During his captivity in the High Clerist's Tower, Ariakan watched Solamnic Knights training on horseback and dragonback, and noticed that a main target for foot soldiers was legs and knees. To remedy this, Takhisian lower leg armor has curved metal plates (called greaves) which fully shield the shin and the calf, front and back. Each Knight has his own armor tailor-made so a Knight's greaves closely match the contours of his calf muscles. Most Knights wear their greaves over their boots. However, younger Knights have been observed wearing their form fitting greaves tucked fashionably inside oversized boots.

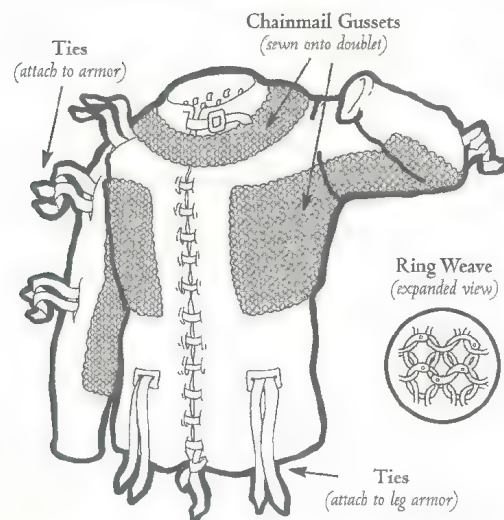
Takhisian thigh armor consists of wrap-around plates (called cuisses). The cuisses are buckled around the thighs with leather straps and tied from above with thongs attached to the arming doublet. Takhisian cuisses wrap more fully around the thighs than the narrow Solamnic thighbalds.

ARMOR OF THE KNIGHTS OF NERAKA



One interesting weakness Ariakan detected in Solamnic leg armor concerned the knees. When standing, a Solamnic Knight's knees were mostly protected, at least in front, where the top of the schyn bald meets the bottom of the thighbald. However, Ariakan noticed that during movement a gap opens up just above the knee where the schynbald and thighbald separate. Since one whack to the kneecap could easily disable a Knight, Takhisian armor includes special knee-shaped plates (called poleyns). The poleyn is attached to the cuisse with a small, articulating lame which allows the armor to bend and pivot naturally with normal movement. The front of each poleyn is decorated with fierce looking skulls. The side flaps are shaped like dragon wings and flair out to protect vulnerable tendons at the back of the knee. These side flaps are quite large on the outside of the leg, where an opponent's weapon is most likely to strike, but on the inside, the side flaps are small so that the knee armor doesn't knock together unnecessarily.

AN ARMING DOUBLET



A FULL CHAIN SHIRT



have in common is a fearsome looking skull. Other common decorations include death lilies, thorny vines, and dragon wings. Ariakan borrowed the idea of individually themed armor from the Solamnic Knights who have their own sword/crown/rose motifs.

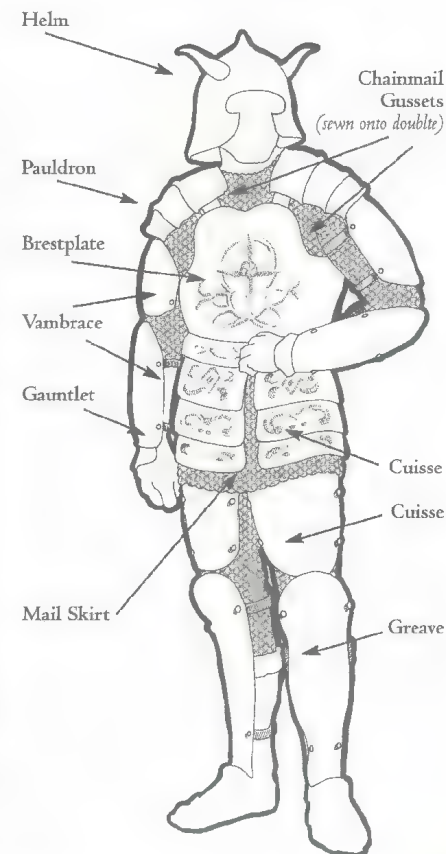
The cuirass usually ends at the waist, thus, to protect the hips and the upper thighs more metal plates (called tassets) extend down to hang just above the thighs. Since the tassets are attached with leather straps, they easily fold up whenever necessary. Although their shape is different, the Takhisian tassets vary little from Solamnic tassets.

Arm Defenses. As with leg armor, historical arm defenses were essentially similar for the armies of good and evil. In the War of the Lance, both the Solamnic Knights and the Dragon Highlords had complete chain mail sleeves, pauldrons, and narrow, gutter-shaped pieces of armor strapped over their forearms and upper arms. The exposed elbows went unprotected. The hands were covered with simple leather gloves.

Ariakan made two significant changes to existing arm armor: First, he replaced the full chain mail sleeve with the smaller gussets on the arming doublet; and second he encased more of the arm with steel plates. The Knights of Neraka wear interconnected armor plates over their shoulders (pauldrons), upper and lower arms (vambraces), elbows (couters), and armpits (besagues). Many of these pieces are attached to each other with articulated lames which allow them to bend and pivot. Each piece is also buckled in place with leather straps and can be held even more firmly by the thongs which poke through from the doublet. The strings can be laced through small holes in the armor.

To protect his hands in battle, a Knight of Neraka wears metal gauntlets with individual steel finger plates. Inside each gauntlet, leather gloves fit through tiny little loops riveted to each finger plate. The finger plates are made in small sections for flexibility. The cuff of each steel gauntlet covers the wrist and forearm, front to back except for the palm of the hand, so that knights can easily hold their grip.

ARMOR OF THE KNIGHTS OF SOLAMNIA



Helmets. The skull-shaped helmets worn by the Knights of Neraka are more reminiscent of the dragonhelm worn by Highlords than the simple helms worn by the Solamnic Knights. Ariakan borrowed from his father's experience, but did not merely copy the fearsome-looking dragonhelm, he improved its usefulness by deleting horns altogether. While a prisoner in the High Clerist's Tower, watching the Solamnic Knights train in swordfights and blunt-weapon duels, Ariakan realized that horns increased the chance that a sword blow might "catch" on a helm with the jarring effect of whiplash, or even causing a concussion. The horns deleted along with a revised sloping skull design. Ariakan's Takhisian helmet encourages any head strike to become a mere glancing blow.

Of course, many Knights of Neraka don't wear their helmets until just before a battle starts. Although a helmet is made more comfortable by inside padding, it can still become suffocatingly hot—especially when worn in the summer. Further, the Takhisian helmet with the visor reduces a Knight's peripheral vision and hearing.

CONCLUSION

The Takhisian armor weighs approximately the same as traditional Solamnic armor: about sixty-five pounds. Yet through the use of rivets and pivoting joints, it is easily as practical and flexible as its most celebrated counterparts. Indeed, the armor designed by Lord Ariakan can be said to be Krynn's most practical armor thus far.



A PASSAGE FROM THE GREAT WORK OF VELNA, ANNOTATED BY HEREDON SCORDULUS

In the era of Huma, the great philosopher-general Velna wrote his now-famous treatise *The Science of War*. This excerpt from the first chapter adds comments from two post-Cataclysm scholars, Heredon and Cordulus.

Once a cleric of Paladine, Heredon was stripped of his powers when the gods left Krynn following the Cataclysm. He then joined the Solamnic Knights as a "Keeper of the Knowledge."

Cordulus was a court scribe to the City State of Palanthas, who essentially revitalized Velna's work in his own writings, helping to make it one of the most requested volumes from the Great Library of Palanthas.





BATTLEFIELD ROLE

The key to employing or identifying troops is to look beyond their armor and weapons. The arms and armor are but a symptom of any troop designation.

Heredon: To best employ soldiers, and to identify enemies, it is important to understand the nature of troop formations. You have all heard the terms "heavy infantry" or "light cavalry," but it is important to know what they mean in a battlefield context. Understanding different troop types and how to use them is the first key to military success.

Cordulus: The term "heavy infantry," for example, does not refer to the heavy arms and armor of the troops, but rather to its battlefield role.

MEDIUM INFANTRY

The role of the medium infantry unit differs depending on the army. The unit could be part of the main battle line, part of a flanking force, used as a rear guard, or held in reserve for a finishing blow.

Heredon: The mainstay of most armies throughout the history of Krynn has been the medium infantry. Quite simply, medium infantry is the catch-all phrase for any infantry that does not fall into any other category.

Cordulus: Because of their flexibility, well-trained medium infantry have a distinct battlefield advantage. With several of these units as the core of an army, an army commander can react with speed and adaptability to any change in tactics. The best medium infantry of the modern era are the Brutes, enlisted by the Knights of Takhisis for the invasion of Ansalon. They have a martial mentality and solid discipline, making them battle-winners, as we have seen.

HEAVY INFANTRY

Heavy infantry are the shock troops of an army. They are generally better armed and armored than the rest of the army, but not necessarily so. The heavy infantry are usually slow and lack the versatility of other fighting units, but they offer staying power in an

army. On the defense, they form the backbone of the line. On the offense, they are the crushing force that breaks the enemy line and creates a hole for exploitation advance.

Heredon: Not every army uses heavy infantry. Their lack of mobility and flexibility make them a poor choice for a field army. They are also expensive to maintain, but two armies facing each other, one with heavy infantry and the other lacking same, it is the first that will carry the day.

Cordulus: Minotaurs are famous for their heavy infantry. They use their fleet for transport purposes, offsetting the usual deployment problems. The best of the heavy infantry, however, must be the Dwarves of Thorbardin. Most of their field army is heavy infantry, as dwarves disdain elite fighting strategies. Dwarves may not be known for doing anything swiftly, but a solid line of dwarven heavy infantry advancing toward you is an awful sight to see.

LIGHT INFANTRY

Every army maintains light infantry in one form or another, but only a very few can claim superior training. Light infantry should be fast, maneuverable, rarely in formed ranks. They improvise skirmish lines, or flank security and harassing forces. They are perfect for operations in difficult terrain where drilled operations are of little use. The success of light infantry is rarely noted—the glory of the day's win usually goes to other soldiers in the army; but the failure of light infantry frequently spells defeat.

Heredon: Generally, any soldier can be trained as a light infantryman. In winning armies, however, only the best candidates are placed in this category. The ability to jab at the enemy, continually and imaginatively, and then fall back and disperse when the enemy counterattacks, is difficult under the best of circumstances. The true elite units are light infantry.

Cordulus: Two examples of prime light infantry are the elves and the ogres. The elves are well known for their fighting spirit, yet they do not hold to ranks like human infantry. Most people think of ogres as metal-plated thugs with brutal

weapons—in effect, heavy infantry. Remember that light infantry are defined by their role, not what they wear as armor or carry as weapons. The powerfully built ogres move across terrain at a terrifying speed, they are able to hit and run and do so again and again. They are the masters of the lightning-quick raid.

MEDIUM CAVALRY

The role of the medium cavalry is elementary. It does whatever is asked of it. It can screen an army, reconnoiter forward, or harass at will, but most of the time it sits on a flank of the line waiting for the order to charge. When the charge comes, the medium cavalry hopes to fall upon the enemy at its weakest points, causing chaos and mayhem out of proportion to its numbers.

Heredon: Cavalry units are difficult to delineate, as their roles are blurred in the heat of fighting. Medium cavalry, like medium infantry, is a catch-all phrase for cavalry that are not specialized for any stated purpose.

Cordulus: Solamnics provide a good example of the uses of medium cavalry, but look to the Knights of Takhisis for mastery. No matter what we think of the Dark Knights, their equine training and martial discipline make them the best when it comes to medium cavalry. They have mastered all of the traditional roles and are constantly inventing new uses for horse soldiers.

HEAVY CAVALRY

Heavy cavalry are easy to spot because of both their arms and armor. They are behemoths of steel and horseflesh, usually armed with long lances. They are used to crack the opposing line through sheer dint of force. Only the most determined foes can stand before the close-order charge of heavy cavalry.

Heredon: Heavy cavalry is an expensive unit to maintain, and slow arrive at the battlefield. Once there, though, their deployment alone has terrified veteran armies and won many battles. In full cry they are truly a sight to behold.

Cordulus: The heavy cavalry of the Solamnics Knights

reigns supreme. Each of the orders maintains a crack regiment. Few armies in military annals have repulsed a concerted charge from the Solamnic Knights' heavy cavalry.

LIGHT CAVALRY

Light cavalry sets the tone and tempo of a battle. They are the masters of strategic contact. They screen the enemy, and spy on formations, carry out raids, constantly look for opportunity and surprise, while choosing the best ground for protracted fighting.

Heredon: Light cavalry can change the complexion of a battle. Their sniping at enemy flanks forces retreats or breaks in formation. Their moves must anticipate countermoves. Light cavalry is the most difficult unit to lead.

Cordulus: Although it may be hard to believe, mounted goblins excel in this category. Every dragonarmy of the War of the Lance had its screening force of goblin light cavalry. We could learn a few things about the utility of light cavalry from further study of the vile goblins.

ARCHERS

Most archers, especially those in specialized archer companies, qualify as medium infantry. They have two main jobs: Either they must hold their place in the battle line or support the advance from cluster positions.

Heredon: Cavalry can be equipped with bow as well. Horsebowmen can provide decisive killing power while evading resistance. The goblins excel at this art, too. They mix sabre units with archer units in their light cavalry to provide their army with a fluid attack or harassing wing.

Cordulus: Units equipped with ballistae, trebuchets, or other siege engines are also classified as archers. These artillery units obviously have greater range and impact against an entrenched enemy. Heredon is wrong about goblin archers. Elves are the most skilled archers on Krynn, and the mercenary companies of Abanasinia used elven archers in its light infantry to formidable advantage. No goblin army has ever stood in the face of elven archers.

MIXED UNITS

A formation may have mixed arms, armor, even races, yet it fights only one distinct role on the battlefield. Identify this role properly, and you will know how to best them.

Heredon: Velna would have us believe that there is no such thing as a mixed unit. I do not believe that one rule can govern every situation. It is here that I differ with Velna. The mixed unit is the one indispensable, perhaps modern innovation.

Cordulus: The Dwarves of Thorbardin employ axemen and halberdiers in the same regiment, for example, The Elves of Silvanesti and Qualinesti both use bowmen and swordsmen in the mixed companies. Yet their designation does not change. Heredon has missed the point. Remember that it is the tactical role in battle that defines troop efficacy.

ENGINEERS

Engineers provide an army with many advantages, mainly, it must be said, outside of battle. Engineers provide the entrenching, bridging, stonework, metalwork, and construction support that an army needs to stay in the field.

Heredon: Some engineers may be employed as medium infantry in action. They are well trained and disciplined, usually to a higher degree than ordinary soldiers. They are never frivolously deployed, however, and will not be expended in battle unless the need is critical.

Cordulus: The draconian field engineers of the dragonarmies were the best organized, best led and worst utilized engineers in Krynn's military history. The Knights of Takhisis borrowed their example in forming their own engineer units during the Chaos War, but necessarily relied on human soldiers. The Dark Knights' engineers were perhaps better directed, but lacked the sheer strength and unpredictability of the draconian units.

Velna does not mention sappers and miners, but they are important to any siege operation. They are specialist engineers, who often dig tunnels under defensive walls during

standoffs. Once under the wall, they dig out a huge cavern, pack it with explosive manure sacks, and fire it when all is clear. If all goes well, when the cavern explodes the wall above crumbles to the ground. It is then up to the heavy infantry to plunge into the gap.

SUPPLY

Armies march on their stomachs. Forget this and you have no army.

Heredon: We have all heard Velna's famous dictum about supply. The reason we have all heard it is that it is gospel to soldiers everywhere. The more professional the supply operations—commissary and artificer—the better the army will fight. Nothing boosts morale like good and plenty food.

Cordulus: The ogres and goblins get away with very little in the way of supply, choosing to live off the land and anything taken off dead bodies. But among human armies, particularly, you will find long lines of supply wagons, artificer wagons, commissary wagons. It was Lord Ariakas, back in the days before the War of the Lance, who once said that among soldiers, it is the amateur who practices tactics, it is the professional who studies supply. We may hate all that Ariakas stands for, but on this point he is indeed right.



ULIN MAJERE

MACE OF THE KINGPRIEST

The ancient relic called the mace of the Kingpriest dates back to the time when Istar claimed dominance on Ansalon. As the name suggests, a Kingpriest of Istar wielded this mace, though nobody knows when. Scholars suspect that one of the Kingpriests, a man named Arandour, Ardoran, or Arndor, depending on which resource one looks at, carried this most efficacious weapon.

During their research in the many libraries around Ansalon, various scholars have discovered the unique creation process of this weapon. First, dwarves of the Khalkist Mountains forged the mace out of metal delved from their deepest mine. Then, Silvanesti mages enchanted it under the full light of Solinari. Finally, human followers of Paladine, Mishakal, Kiri-Jolith, Habbakuk, and Branchala blessed it in an hour-long ceremony given at high noon.

With this magical mace, Arandour reportedly led several campaigns against the forces of Evil. Some of the mace's powers include added protection against the forces arrayed against him (records vary as to what form this protection took), and an increased ability to strike down foes. The former power has been noted in several ways: It emits brilliant light upon command to dispel offensive magic; its wielder swings it so quickly that a blinding shield forms through which only the strongest magic can penetrate; or a shield of glowing yellow energy surrounds the wielder, preventing enemy spells from reaching him. Records agree about its offensive capabilities, however. When wielded by a righteous person and when striking a sound blow, the mace can ignore even the stoutest armor, causing a substantially greater amount of damage than a normal mace. Scholars further note that this mace was lost to the world at the Battle of the Crying Heavens, which none can attribute a date to since the only source of this information is an obscure ballad.



KUNDOR'S BOOK OF MANY THINGS

Kundor's Book of Many Things was written by a very old (and not very wise) kender named Kundor Fatesfeathers. Kundor's eccentric nature has earned him the dubious title among his fellow kender of the "only kender wizard" ever, although scholars across Ansalon argue about the verity of this claim. They believe that his kender nature could not possibly allow him to be a true spellcaster since kender do not possess the necessary patience and wisdom to keep their noses in a spellbook for hours of tedious arcane study. When faced with this argument, several kender merely state that Kundor was different somehow.

According to the kender elders, Kundor satisfied his insatiable curiosity about the world around him by experiencing it with his mind instead of traveling on his feet. After seeing a mage cast a spell that caused her to vanish, Kundor's sense of wonder got the bet-

ter of him, and he started "researching" the art of spellcasting. As time passed and as more resources (such as spellbooks) got "left behind" or "lost" by traveling spellcasters, Kundor decided to create his own spellbook. After all, that's what all wizards did! Unfortunately, his first (and ultimately only) such experience involved creating a spell "anthology" on pieces of parchment. Thus, *Kundor's Book of Many Things* came into existence.

The book itself resembles a wizard's traveling spellbook, measuring five by eight inches, with a leather-bound cover and copper corners. The only distinct feature is on the cover where Kundor's symbol, a feathered dragon, is engraved. The book contains twenty weathered pieces of parchment. The parchment contains the neat handwriting of Kundor, who wrote in the kender language, of course. According to the kender elders, after a brother flipped through the pages and read one of them, he discovered that his skin had turned an unusual shade of opalescent purple. Needless to say, he walked from the room to show off his new coloration to his fellow kender. (He would have run, but he felt strangely tired.) When Kundor's brother returned to show the book off, though, he discovered his wife standing in the room, looking astonished. Evidently, the book had disappeared as she started to read it.

Since then, the book has appeared in several locations, causing all manner of confusion or odd occurrences. A kender in the Palanthas jail found it in her cell and read it. Once done, she and her fellow kender cellmates found a giant spider in their midst. After the guards let the kender out so that they could destroy the spider, the anonymous kender left with the book. A week later, when she found herself back in the same cell with the same book, she flipped through the book again and promptly found that she was now a "he" with no book in sight. Recently, this book has surfaced in the Citadel of Light, where the first kender to stumble across it, read it, then found himself invisible. One of the masters of the Citadel promptly took the book away from the kender.



THE SWORD OF BETRAYAL

The sword of betrayal is a vengeful blade with magical intelligence that attacks worshippers of Kiri-Jolith, Habbakuk, Paladine, and Gilean. Forged by a master smith as a gift for Lord Erran Cerenor, this blade was long wielded by the Cerenor family. Lord Erran himself gained this sword of Solamnic design in recognition for his utter devotion to Paladine. Scholars who have researched Solamnic families have found the Cerenors to be upstanding men and women overall. Unfortunately, even the best and brightest families have their moments of darkness. Lord Valeran Cerenor, a Knight of the Crown, believed himself betrayed by the gods of his Knights and by Gilean, the god of balance, during the Summer of Chaos. As Lord Valeran died on the High Clerist's Tower, he smashed his family's sword against the battlement, breaking its blade from its hilt. As far as scholars can discern (some using arcane scrying methods), shortly after Lord Valeran's loss of faith and subsequent death, devout worshippers of Paladine, Habbakuk, Kiri-Jolith, and Gilean began to die around Palanthas. The killer was different each time, but the murder weapon was always the same. It was described as a blade about a foot in length ending in a jagged tip, clearly of old Solamnic design. Many times investigators in Palanthas (some of them Dark Knights) have found the blade. Though they lock it up, it somehow finds its way into the hands of another killer. Further research indicates that it possesses victims, drawing intelligent beings of all kinds into its vengeful presence and forcing them to kill.

Unfortunate wielders of the sword find themselves causing fatal belly wounds with the fragmented sword, even twisting it in the wound and screaming in a raging, questioning voice, "*Est Sularus oth Mithas?*" In the case of followers of Gilean, the murderer calls out in Solamnic, "I see no balance within a victory for Evil! Betrayer!" Once the worshiper has died, the hapless murderer comes out of the blood rage that the sword causes and realizes what he or she has done.

GEMS OF SYNCHRONICITY

Another interesting pair of artifacts are the gems of synchronicity. According to folktales around Kalamán, a wizard and his wife had a traveling show several hundred years ago. The wizard, who had a decided taste for the performing arts, and his wife, a woman with musical and acrobatic talents loved to travel. So instead of settling down in a nice village the wizard and his wife put together a traveling show. After their first year together (and their first route from Kalamán to Palanthas and back to Kalamán again), they decided to add a few sparks to their show. After practicing a very dangerous act that included a barrier of blades and a hoop (the tales vary), the couple discovered that they just barely got the timing right and were very lucky to have come out of the act unscathed. The wizard thought about this problem for some time and came up with an idea. They would need to stop in a town and set up a temporary workshop. After six months, the wizard had a pair of beautiful hollow blue topaz stones. Within the hollow gems swung a tiny pendulum that vibrated the gem faintly. Both stones were attuned to each other, so each vibrated at precisely the same moment. The wizard set these stones onto a golden choker necklace so that the stone lay right on top of the hollow of the neck. When the couple spoke a certain word in unison and started tapping their feet in unison, the pendulum would begin to swing and follow exactly the timing of the couple's foot-tapping. Not only could they use these devices to help time their performances, but they also started using them to gauge a certain amount of time, such as agreeing to meet back at a certain point at exactly thirty beats of the gem.

The gems were said to have been buried with the old couple. It is rumored that if you put your ear to the ground above their graves you can hear their feet tapping in perfect cadence.

THE EYE OF SORLIS

The Eye of Sorlis is a magical gem that was discovered late in the Fourth Age by a mage of the Red Robes named Sorlis. Thanks to her journal, quite a bit of information exists about this artifact.

According to the journal, Sorlis and her traveling companions were caught in a severe summer storm and forced to seek shelter in a forest cave. Deep within the cave, they discovered a dragon's treasure and an unguarded nest of green dragon eggs. While her companions began sorting through the treasure, always keeping an eye out for the missing mother, Sorlis found herself drawn to an enormous gem, nearly eight inches in diameter, nestled among the eggs—a rare red diamond. She plucked the gem from the nest and stared into its faceted depths. As she held it, the stone warmed to her touch. In the meantime, one of her companions, wondered aloud where the nest's mother was. Sorlis, who was still looking into the gem, gasped. An image formed on the top of the diamond showing a green dragon flying through a wild storm and landing on a wooded hillside. The dragon had returned. Warned by the gem, Sorlis and her companions had seconds to prepare to leave before the dragon entered the lair. They panicked and struggled to escape the cave in time, but most of the group, except for Sorlis, was slain. Protected by the gem's magic, she avoided the worst of the damage. Sorlis fled, but the dragon, who had taken several wounds, decided to stay and protect her eggs instead of following after the mage.

As Sorlis worked with the gemstone she learned that by thinking about a specific dragon, she could view it for about five minutes. If she knew the dragon's human name, she could watch what it was doing for an hour, though after about ten minutes, the dragon somehow felt her stare and would take various actions to ward against such scrying. If she knew the dragon's true name, then she could hear the dragon and even pick up some surface thoughts every now and again, depending on her proximity to the dragon. However, every time she used the jewel in this manner, the green dragon she stole it from knew where she was and which dragon she was looking at. The gem could be used only once per day and required a full day of "rest" before Sorlis could use it again. Thankfully for scholars, Sorlis left her journal about this trip with a friend of hers at the Ergothian library.

THE STAVES OF THE GODS OF MAGIC

Long ago, after the gods of magic aided the elves in their fight against the evil dragons with gifts of magical gems, but well before the Cataclysm, a set of magical staves started showing up in the elven records of Silvanesti. Called the Staves of the Gods of Magic, these three staves appeared to a mage of each order of magic. From what little scholars could determine before the Silvanesti Shield came into being, each staff was granted to a descendant or relative of the original three elves who wielded magic during the First Dragon War. As each elf also followed a different god of magic, the staves came to be named after each god: the staff of Solinari, the staff of Lunitari, and the staff of Nuitari.

As Silvanesti records indicate, the staff of Solinari and the staff of Nunitari have both been lost since before the Cataclysm. The staff of Lunitari, however, is known to exist still. It consists of a strong ruby shaft and is tipped with gold filigree paint. A faceted ruby is held onto its tip by four metal prongs. This staff was passed from elf to elf until just before the Silvanesti Shield came up. Then, a young sorcerer of House Mystic gave it to her betrothed for his protection, as he had duties in the Silvanesti Forest as a kirath scout. Through various misadventures outside Silvanesti, he has discovered that the staff seems to magically enhance his ability to defend himself by allowing him to strike with blinding speed. It also provides several other boons, such as providing magical effects that change or shape inanimate matter into something else, summon animals, and temporarily enchant other items with a magical boon of some sort. It also gives the wielder knowledge that danger is near. This latter effect seems to resemble the feeling one gets when one is being watched, from all accounts.

To: Sister Eryn Mychall, Administrative Branch,
Communications Dept., Library of Palanthas
From: Brother Kurin Petrov, Academic Branch, Research
Dept., Topical Histories Subdept., Library of Palanthas
Date: 13 Palesweli, 363AC
Re: Artifacts of Potential Danger to the Ansalonian Populace

Dear Madam,

Enclosed are the notes you requested regarding the magical artifact known as "The Eye of Chemosh." I think it will make an important addition to the list of potentially dangerous artifacts that Sir Thomas Crowe of the Knights of Solamnna requested. I was able to reconstruct some of the history of this object, as well as the artifacts related to it, from Lorekeeper Astinus's *Chronicles* as well as other historical sources. It is unfortunate that the priesthood of Chemosh was uncooperative, however understandable, given the powers of the Eye, and the events in which it was involved. The Council on Religions continues its efforts to welcome this reclusive order into its multifaceted dialogue. To continue, I have summarized the physical characteristics of the eye, its historical background, unfortunately, its present whereabouts is unknown, and is a subject of debate.

Please do not hesitate to contact us again if need be,

Praise to Gilean,
Brother Petrov

THE EYE OF CHEMOSH

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

According to artwork and descriptions, the Eye of Chemosh is an amber sphere roughly six inches across. A disc of clear stone (as yet unidentified) is imbedded in the surface of it, and a disc of onyx imbedded with that disc. The descriptions from folklore and from the historical accounts conflict when detailing the inner, clear stone disc. Some describe it as clear and some describe it as blood red, sometimes both descriptions occur in the same text. The surface of the Eye itself is reputed to be covered in inscriptions. The color variation and the inscriptions may be the results of its arcane nature.

HISTORY

The origins of the Eye are unknown, except through folklore. The barbarians of the Southlands (pre-Cataclysmic Southeastern Solamnna) (Sahlin 58PC) speak of an ancestor's soul falling from the heavens when he was found unworthy of the afterlife. The soul was cast out in the dead of winter, a short time before the coming of Salius Ruven, who was believed to be a returned spirit of the ancestor. This coincides with the astronomical records of the Silvanesti observatory, which record a falling star impacting the same area in winter of 573PC.

Weeks after the appearance and impact of the star, raids began to occur in the Southlands. The army only attacked at night, and only when the snowstorms were their worst. The folklore of the area that survived the Cataclysm speaks of ice zombies—the bodies of men, frozen solid and impervious to the simple clubs and weapons the people possessed. The tales speak also of the zombies howling, these windlike howls striking fear into even the hardiest warrior and driving lesser men and women mad. It is presumed that during this time Ruven was attempting to build an army. Accounts of the few that survived the massacre at Chrinor claim that nothing was stolen from the city, except the bodies of the dead.

The historical record provides a possible reason for the creation of the army by Chemosh and why Istar was selected. In 573PC, the groups that would eventually become the Istarian Empire were united but militarily and technologically still weak. Their tendencies towards zealotry however, had already begun to show themselves. Between the years of 573-575PC, temples to Chemosh and shrines to Morgion across the Istarian Plain were burned, in apparent retaliation for a plague that swept through the area, killing thousands. The army of Salius Ruven, was apparently on what could be considered a "Holy War" of sorts, to destroy those who offended the God of the Dead.

With little to stop them, the army traveled northward, cutting through Silvanesti, south of the Khalkist Mountains. There was little information on the time period from the elves, however, without high-powered magic, resistance would have been futile. The Eye is rumored to be able to restore the dead to life, this information provided by a fragmentary account of a battle with elves in the forests of Silvanesti. This account also describes another living being, Entwai DiMacla, a human mercenary, possibly of Solamnnaic origin. DiMacla was the Ruven's General, the

actual tactician and leader of the forces while the dark priest provided the energy to sustain the army with the Eye. In the battle with the elves, Tiriell Dakanaan, the Elven commander, slew DiMacla. After the elves retreated, using the Eye, Salius Ruven brought DiMacla's soul back to the world of the living. The origin and ultimate fate of DiMacla is unknown, for he disappears from the story when the army enters the depths of the great Eastern Desert. The dark horde continued its slow march northward, across the desert, where a second type of specialized undead was created. The folk tales of the nomadic desert barbarians that eventually settled in Post-Cataclysmic Khur (see Dehele 198AC) recall that the attacks occurred during harsh sandstorms, in the middle of the night. Among the attackers were beings that were dressed in the clothing of ancient desert dwellers, the nomads among them. (I have sent descriptions of the attire to the archaeological department, as they may have further information on empires existing in the area prior to recorded history.)

These beings had withered dried skin, and similar to the ice zombies emitted a scream that could be heard both before the sandstorm arrived, and during the storm. The effects of the scream were similar to those of the howl of the ice zombies (see above) however; these creatures were unharmed by the swords of the nomads. While the records are not very detailed, it is presumed that the army added the fallen from these battles to its own ranks.

At the same time this was happening, an avatar of Kiri-Jolith appeared to the High Clerist while on the road to Palanthas. This is written in the records of the Knights of Solamnna. The exact content of the message delivered is unknown, but within two days of the avatar appearing, a contingent of over two thousand Knights and almost two hundred healers and priests departed from Palanthas and the surrounding area. The narrative of this extraordinary and unknown tale switches to this group, as the undead army continued to march tirelessly forth towards Istar and the surrounding areas through areas about which no records survive.

The expeditionary force, being on the opposite side of the continent, could not possibly intercept the undead horde before it reached its target. At this point folklore again takes hold of the narrative, as legends speak of several Gods appearing to the Knights. The first was Sirion, the flowing flame. Again, the details of the events that transpired are not clear. What is known is that the army of Knights, which would have been forced to stop each night

to camp, was able to proceed even then, for a column of fire, reaching into the sky, moved ahead of them, guiding their way. The fire damaged nothing and did not spread, further proof of its magical nature. This sign, visible hundreds of miles away, guided the mile-long army column from Eastern Solamnna, through the mountains of Thoradin, to the Istarian Plains. The obvious question to ask is how did the army continue to travel without stopping to rest or eat? The followers of Mishakal and Zivilyn traveling with the Knights were apparently further empowered by their gods when they ascended the slopes of a mountain in the Northern Khalkists. A vision was granted, that of Mishakal and of the Tree of Life itself. These Gods, through their followers, withdrew the needs of the body from the army, so that they might intercept the spreading darkness. This information is speculative, and other than folktales, has no concrete evidence. The thought of one constantly mobile, untiring, hungerless army, with a single purpose, driving forward to meet another army of the same characteristics brings to mind the philosophical idea about being careful when battling monsters lest you become one yourself.

As the undead army moved relentlessly towards Istar, the legions dedicated to this fledgling empire rode out to meet them. Repeatedly they attacked, each time being butchered and added to the ranks of the horde. The Istarian legions, having only bronze weapons, no healers and no holy warriors among them, were no match for the undead horde.

The final portion of this chapter of history is very unclear. The two armies met, but the Knights Expeditionary force was initially defeated and forced to retreat. It was at this time that the priestesses of Mishakal say that Salius Ruven was granted a vision. The vision came not from Chemosh, but instead from Mishakal herself. Again, the details are few, except that the true nature of the "reward" Chemosh promised to his follower was revealed. The bargain that Chemosh struck—that of granting immortality to the priest, was only half true. The dark priest would live forever—but as one of the Lord of Death's undead minions. The priest fled from his own army, the Eye with him, towards the forces of the Knights—fearing death at their hands much less than the eventual undeath he would receive from his lord. Using his knowledge, and the powers of the priests of light and neutrality, brass rings were forged (see below), carved with intricate symbols to counteract the magic of the Eye. The priests and the repentant former priest of Chemosh

worked atop a hill, the Knights defending it from the surrounding undead masses. As the Knights and priests used their powers and their holy steel, the horde continued to attack, slowly overwhelming the defenders with their numbers. Even the Candles of Zivilyn could not stem the undead tide. The priests atop the mount worked to perform the rites to bind the Eye even as they were cut down by the undead that were climbing the hill. As the final prayer was uttered, the Binding glowed a brilliant white while the red disc in the eyes surface pulsed red. The horde, which had been under Chemosh's direct control, fell into disarray, not moving or attacking. The remaining Knights and priests reacted swiftly, dispatching the remnants of the tortured spirits within the bodies to the heavens. Ruven, mortally wounded by one of his own creations, revealed a final secret of the Eye before dying. The horde that would have attacked Istar was tiny compared to what the Eye could potentially create. As more energy was drawn into the Eye, it became more powerful, and to create more minions took less and less power. The purpose of the stored power, Ruven revealed, was not to destroy Istar, but to punish it for its self-righteousness. Chemosh intended to steal the life energy from the people, and create a necropolis, a kingdom of the dead, where he would rule eternally unopposed. This energy remains untapped, bound within the Eye, wherever it is.

Truly, stopping this army was a turning point in Ansalon's history, for if the army of the Knights had failed, an undead kingdom would be all-powerful. The fate of the Eye is a mystery. Some sources say it lies at the bottom of the Blood Sea in the ruins of Istar, with other artifacts, deep in the Vault of the Kingpriest. Others place it in the heart of the tower of the High Clerist, buried deep within the tower foundations, placed there by arcane magic. Still other sources say that it was lost by the Knights during the dark ages following the Cataclysm, and rests with the followers of Chemosh. These same people say that Chemosh's faithful are struggling to break its bindings to unleash its horrific powers.

POWERS

No definitive first-hand account of this obscure artifact or its powers exists. The powers described below were pulled from second-hand literary descriptions, folklore and legends and hence could not be identified as specific spells granted by Chemosh. This difficulty was compounded by

a lack of aid on the part of the priests of Chemosh. The Eye apparently has the power to raise the dead back to life, as found when the warrior Entwai DiMacla was resurrected by Salius Ruven. The battle of Chrinor (a city in Southwestern Solamnia, near the Silvanesti Border, destroyed in the Cataclysm—Kurlin 305AC) provided the first recorded glimpse of the most horrific power of the Eye: that of life stealing. It is important to note that the life-stealing capability is closely linked with the power to raise an undead army. Apparently, after the life energy is sucked from the body, the Eye stores it, until the body itself dies. After the body dies, the energy is released from the Eye back into the fresh corpse, reanimating it. While the energy is contained within the Eye, the life essences appear to commingle, as described in Trogg's (765PC) work on life energy transference. This mixing prevents the complete essence of an individual from returning to its host body, thus robbing it of both autonomy and life, instead damning it to undead servitude. At the city of Chrinor, a garrison of warriors came out to battle the army of ice zombies (see below), skeletons and spirits and was instead drawn into their ranks by the Eye. There are two other main abilities: the above mentioned raising of the undead army, which involves the dead freeing themselves from their gravesites and joining the horde, and the final power—controlling the undead. This ability is identical to the prayer or spell granted to priests, with the exception that the numbers that can be controlled with the Eye's aid are far more than an individual priest or wizard could possibly control.

Accounts of several other abilities were found in single sources, whereas the powers listed above were confirmed by multiple sources. The Eye of Chemosh may grant the user the ability to see through the eyes of any of his or her minions, and the Eye itself may be a portal through which Chemosh himself can observe the world, specifically his army. A final power that the Eye may possess is that of controlling weather, at least to a small degree. The storms which masked the early attacks were unnatural in their ferocity, (Dehele 158AC, Sahlin 58PC) giving rise to the theory that the Eye of Chemosh can summon storms. However, storms did not occur during the final battle with the Knights on the hilltop, thus, the storms themselves may have been summoned by the dark priest, and not by the Eye of Chemosh.

RELATED ARTIFACTS

Several artifacts are interwoven with the story of the Eye of Chemosh. These are the Bindings of Kiri-Jolith and the Candles of Zivilyn. The Bindings of Kiri-Jolith, as mentioned above, are brass rings, that interlock, covering the pupil and iris of the eye. They are engraved with potent counter-magics to prevent the Eye from being used again. The Bindings emits a wailing keen when there are any undead within one hundred feet of the Eye, and destroys any undead that are exposed to them. When the Bindings begin to wail, the Eye also begins to pulsate with a low humming sound, the Iris glowing red and fading in time with the pulsating hum.

It is assumed that priests of Chemosh would incur pain from touching the Bindings, but because they are not undead, are not destroyed. The Candles of Zivilyn are the other item that figured prominently in the tale of the Eye of Chemosh. These candles were used by the followers of Zivilyn that traveled with the Knights of Solamnia.

The candles apparently began as empty bronze discs, much like a candleholder. The discs are engraved with prayers to Zivilyn, on the upper and lower surfaces. They act as vessels for life energy, similar to the Eye. However, from the descriptions and the records of the Priestesses of Zivilyn, the candles absorb the energy and actually grow upward from the bronze plate. As more energy is absorbed from destroyed undead, the candle grows taller. At a certain point, the candle can absorb no more energy and lights itself. Once this occurs, the candle cannot be extinguished, and it releases the energy of the dead into the heavens to be with the Gods. In this way, the souls can find peace, as they are whole once more.

THE HAND OF HABBAKUK AND THE CRY OF CHISLEV

DESCRIPTION

The Hand of Habbakuk is a wooden staff, one that appears simple in its materials but ornate in its construction. The six-foot-long staff appears as a single

wooden rod at its base, which separates into four intertwining wooden rods. The upper tip consists of a handlike shape formed of the four wooden rods. This unique item is reputed to be made of five types of wood, these being oak, willow, pine, vallenwood, and an unidentified fifth type of wood.

HISTORY

The events surrounding the staff took place around 1000PC in southwestern Ergoth. Little is known about this period of Ergothian history, as the empire was in decline following the Rose Rebellion in 1800PC. Scholarship in this once great empire never recovered, and eventually even the University in Daltigoth closed. Thus, this era is recorded sporadically.

A thousand years before the Cataclysm, an armada appeared off the southwestern coast of Ergoth. The Ergothian Navy, being a shadow of its former glory, was easily defeated. The invaders, now unopposed, landed troops on the coast to establish an encampment. This landing was fateful for the invaders, as they chose to destroy sacred forests and wilderness in their tasks. The God Habbakuk, having dominion over the land and the sea, was enraged at this destruction. Though he was loath to act against mortals without the permission of Paladine, he could not sit idle. A follower of Habbakuk, a young human female, was called through a vision to a sacred grove in Balifor, where she was given the staff. Legend tells that Habbakuk and Chislev crafted the staff, with Zivilyn's aid, from the trees of Zhan, the forest beyond the edge of the world. The same druid legends say that the fifth type of wood is a gift from Zivilyn, wood from the Tree of Life itself.

This unknown druid traveled west, towards Ergoth, with the aid of the Gods. She was carried over mountains by a giant eagle, to Silvanesti, where the elven Speaker of the Stars gifted her with the Cry of Chislev, a powerful Horn of Summoning (see below). A beast appeared from the forest, one that was unknown even to the eyes of the druid. This creature identified itself as spirit of the forest and offered its aid for part of her journey. Its unique nature allowed

it to travel through the forests at great speed, but not beyond them. Parts of her journey are lost to history and legend, but through the aid of the gods and their children, she crossed Ansalon in only days, a journey that would usually take months. Upon reaching the southwestern coast of Ergoth, where the army was destroying the forest to build fortifications and engines of destruction, the true powers of the horn and the staff were revealed.

Atop a mountain near the forest, she blew the horn. Its call echoed across the Ergothian wilderness, no creature of nature resisting its call. The children of the forests, the faeries, the wild elves, the animals and insects of the earth answered the summons. The call of the horn reached out to the seas themselves, summoning a great leviathan from the depths to serve its lord, Habbakuk. The bones of the earth answered the summons of the horn, behemoths of stone and soil rising to fight the invaders. The staff called out to the plants and the trees, which willingly gave their aid. The legends of the druids say that the army of invaders was engulfed by a tide of animals, insects and forest dwellers, all defending their home. The plants entangled the fleeing army, the trees seizing and crushing the armored warriors like eggshells. Those few who reached the coasts found no way to escape—the sea itself had retreated, their landing ships now too far from the waters edge.

The armada at sea faced its own enemies. The leviathan raged through the fleet, the lesser fishes devouring those that fell overboard. The ships themselves answered the call of the staff, their wooden masts and hulls returning to life once more. Like the trees on land, they attacked the crews, crushing or battering them.

There were no known survivors of this invading fleet, so their identity remains unknown. Some relics have been found deep in the forests of Ergoth, of designs and sizes unfamiliar to experts. The ultimate fate of the druid is unknown, as is the fate of the horn and staff.

POWERS

The staff has several powers, these being the power to summon, the power to control, and the power to make plants grow. The staff calls out to both living and dead plants, binding and controlling them with its power.

The Cry of Chisleiv is a horn made of ivory, from an unknown type of animal. The horn can summon all manner of animal life, and can be heard by those who have a strong affinity with nature, such as faerie folk, magical creatures and some elves. It can also summon elemental creatures in some rare circumstances.

The relics of the invaders are unsuitable for average-sized users. They are far too large for humans. They would be appropriate in size for ogres, and many of the bands in Southern Ergoth possess artifacts from the invaders, without knowing their origins.

References:

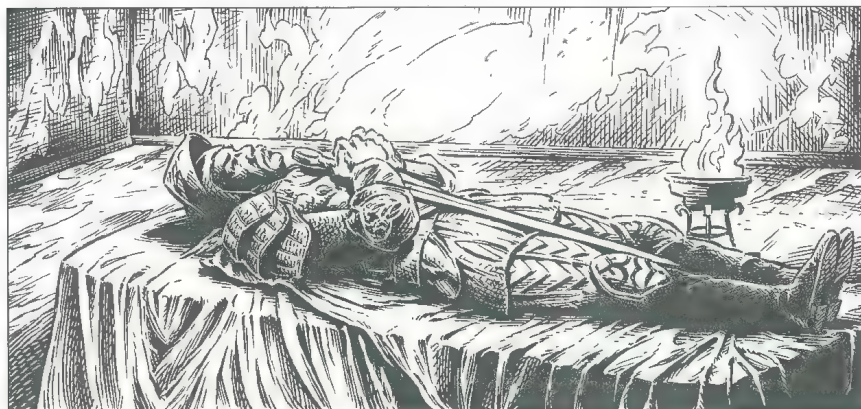
- Astinus of Palanthas
577-78PC
Chronicles
- Dehele, Awrence
198AC
*Sands of Time:
The Rise of the Barbarians of Khur
from Nomad to City-State*
- Kurlin, Ricio
305AC
*Cities of Pre-Cataclysm Ansalon
Volume 3 (of 7 Volumes)*
- Sahlin, Kyra
58PC
*Folktales of the Southern
Solamnic Lowlands*
- Trogg, Vunde
765PC
*Boundaries Beyond:
Life Energy Transference and External Storage*

(Currently on loan to Wizards Conclave, Wayreth Tower)



For the purposes of this document, the party of the first part shall be known as the party of the first part. The party of the second part shall be known as the party of the second part. If the party of the first part should predecease the party of the second part, the party of the second part, from that moment forward, *ad infinitum*, shall be known as the party of the first part. Should the party of the second part predecease the party of the first part, this document shall be made null and void.

That being made clear, we therefore declare herewith, in the legal forms recognized in all civilized lands, whether of Solamnia or Ergoth, the elven lands, the dwarven kingdoms, and even the kender realms, both known and unknown, present and yet to be, completely and without dispute, the following as dictated below (except those passages noted in red, unless initialed and dated legally in the presence of no less than three legal witnesses) is made known.

*Est Sularus orb Mithas*

I, Gunthar uth Wistan of Castle Wistan of the county of Gaard of the Isle of Sancrist, by the grace of Paladine Grandmaster of the Knights of Solamnia, recipient of the Shield of Palanthas, hero of the Battle of Gondan Field, Distinguished Service Medallion, Torc of Kiri-Jolith, Champion of the Faith, Ring-giver, Cupbearer of Habbakuk, Guardian of the Whitestone Glade, Most Puissant Lord, Recipient of the Qualnesti Order of the Alder, Brotherhood of the Axe of Thorbardin, Fellowship of the Hoopak, Society of the Cog of Nevermind, being of sound mind and body, and in the presence of the undersigned witnesses, do hereby acknowledge and authorize Seamus Gavin of Palanthas, or another party to be chosen, should Seamus Gavin predecease the party of the first part, or by legally chosen representatives as described above and below, to execute my wishes in regards to my estate and properties, as described below forthwith:

To the Knights of Solamnia, all properties and treasures in my holding shall be returned according to those amounts set forward in the Measure, except for the following as noted below.

To the people of the Isle of Sancrist, the family granaries of Gavin in the possession of the party of the first part shall be set aside as storehouses in perpetuity, to provide food reserves for times of trouble. Said granaries shall be provided with a manager, who shall be answerable to the party of the second part, or the current executor of this will. Said manager of the granaries shall receive three-fifths of the revenues of the mill at the village of Fornost, near Markennen, as his salary, and he shall have for his abode the cottage located near the above-noted granaries, which is known as Four Pines. The revenues of the estate known as Kallanwek shall be used to purchase sufficient quantities of grain to fill, on a yearly basis, the granaries indicated above. If, by the time of the following year's harvest the contents of the granaries have not been entirely emptied, all surplus grains shall be distributed among the poor by the manager of the granaries, fairly, and in compliance with the contracts provided elsewhere.

To Uhoh Ragnap uth Wistan, esquire, my "adopted" son, I leave the estate and property known as Castle Kalstan, to be his own, and to be the master thereof. An amount of money already set aside in trust shall be used to maintain and keep the estate in a condition worthy of its status and lineage, and to provide for the well being of the master of the castle. From among the Knights of the Order of the Crown, the Grandmaster of the Knights of Solamnia shall choose an *ad litem*

seneschal to act as ambassador between the Knights of Solamnia and the master of the castle. Said seneschal shall hold such post for the period of one standard calendar year, after which time the post may be renewed or a new seneschal appointed. At no time shall the Knights of Solamnia remove or otherwise inconvenience the master of the castle, except in times of declared war. Uhoh Ragnap uth Wistan, esquire, shall hold his position as master of Castle Kalstan until the end of his days. Upon his death, the castle shall revert to the holdings of the Knights of Solamnia.

In addition, Squire Uhoh shall take into his keeping those of my boar hounds that he desires, to keep as his own and to manage as he sees fit. All other hounds currently in keeping at Castle uth Wistan shall remain in keeping at Castle uth Wistan, to be raised or trained, bred and traded, as the master of the castle shall see fit.

To the Lady Laurana of Qualinost, or to her surviving eldest child, I bequeath the original Solamnic armor worn by her during her days as the Golden General and which was stripped from her when she was captured and taken to Neraka. The armor was later discovered, still intact, for sale in a small shop in the city of Kalaman, and was purchased by my agents at the time. I have held it in treasury from that time forward, hoping some day to pass it on to her children.

To Wills, my trusted retainer for more years than either he or I care to remember, I bequeath the set of crockery mugs given to me by my Ladywife on my forty-fifth Day of Life Gift. Sadly, the set is incomplete, one of them having been destroyed during the War of the Lance. In addition, I bequeath to Wills and to his family in perpetuity the estate and lands known as High Tumberway, near Knas.

To Liam Ehrling, my dear friend, I leave my personal arms. All other arms in my possession shall be returned unto the armory of the Knights of Solamnia, except for the armor in which I shall be buried, and my ceremonial sword.

Furthermore, I, Gunthar uth Wistan, also hereby make my wishes known concerning the succession of leadership of the Knighthood. Therefore, those who would honor my memory, honor my wishes and elect Lord Liam Ehrling to the Grandmastership of the Knights of Solamnia according to the rules provided in the revised Measure. I have known Liam since I first sponsored his admission into the Knights of Solamnia, in the Dark Years before the War of the Lance. Little did we know then how the world should turn out, or whether the Knighthood would survive, for the forces moving against us were many and strong. But in Liam I saw the future of the Knighthood. Young and brash but loyal, tempered in the forge of years without hope for either glory or victory, yet determined to continue through until the job is done, he best represented his generation, better even than Sturm Brightblade. For Sturm was a comet, burning bright and brief, lighting the way out of the darkness, but in Liam I believed I saw the one who might one day lead the Knighthood through the gray dawn of a new day.

It is my desire that the estate and property known as Castle uth Wistan shall be held in perpetuity as the home and headquarters of the Knights of Solamnia, and that the Grandmaster of the order, whoever he or she may be, shall make his residence at Castle uth Wistan all the days of his or her term of office. Furthermore, the Grandmaster, being also the master of the castle, shall be allowed to make use of the stables and the progeny of those stables, including the horses and the tack and harness (but not the equine armor, which should be returned to the armories of the Knights of Solamnia), the wagons and carriage and all pertinent materials necessary to their upkeep, and all farm implements and tools held therein. The master of the castle shall draw revenues from the farms, pastures, hayfields, and sties associated with the ownership of the castle as detailed in the deed of the castle, kept in safe keeping in the treasury of Castle uth Wistan, copies of said deed also being kept by the executor of the will or his duly appointed representative, and in the record house of the city of Palanthas. The master of the castle shall direct, or appoint one to direct, the daily activities of the normal operation of the castle, including the hiring and upkeep of retainers, husbandmen, grooms, cooks, servants, and other orderlies of the household, as is deemed necessary to maintain the prestige of the castle as a symbol of the Knights of Solamnia. The master of the castle shall appoint such clerics, acolytes, or priests as are needed to maintain the chapel of Castle uth Wistan, and the treasures and relics associated with that chapel. The duties of said cleric or priest shall include the care

and maintenance of the family tombs located beneath the castle, but not to bury or otherwise inter anyone not of the lineage of the Testator of this Will, both known and unknown, nor to allow the disinterment of those already interred there, for any reason, except in case of the imminent loss of the castle to the armies or representatives of evil or anyone else not associated with or representing the Knights of Solamnia as they are recognized at the time of the execution of this will. The master of the castle shall direct the daily activities, use, and profit of all barns, coops, and byres associated with the estate of the castle, including the cattle and poultry associated with these properties, and shall provide for the maintenance of all cattle and poultry so associated, the profits from which shall go to the maintenance and upkeep of the castle and estate. The master of the castle shall direct the planting and harvesting of the lands and farms associated with the estate of the castle, and shall provide for the maintenance of the lands as needed, including the hiring out for shares of certain portions of the lands, or the keeping of laborers to harvest or sow such lands as are not hired out for shares, and to provide for the maintenance of such domiciles both occupied and unoccupied, which are intended for the use and rent by those hired for the farming of the land for shares. The master of the castle shall direct the produce of such waters and waterways associated with the estate of the castle, including such fish, eels, frogs, snakes, and waterfowl, and the eggs and roe of the same, as may be taken from these waters and waterways. The master of the castle shall also direct and maintain all passage upon those waterways, in all forms, both known and unknown, and to charge such tolls as may be deemed necessary to the maintenance of the castle and estates, now and in the future. The master of the castle shall maintain and provide for the maintenance of guard posts upon said waterways, as needed, to regulate passage on the waterways, and to prevent the intrusion or passage of evil. The master of the castle shall direct and maintain all passage upon all roads and paths passing within or along the recognized boundaries of the estate of the castle, in all forms, both known and unknown, and to charge such tolls as may be deemed necessary to the maintenance of the roads, castle and estate, now and in the future. The master of the castle shall maintain and provide for the maintenance of guard posts along said roads and paths, as needed, to regulate passage on the roads, and to prevent the intrusion or passage of evil by way of the roads and paths. The master of the castle shall direct the use of the forests and woodlands associated with the estate of the castle, and all animals both native and migratory found within the recognized boundaries, the profit from which shall go to the maintenance of the castle and its residents, either in actual monies or items of exchange, or of food or produce of the forests, as well as provide for the care, use, and profit of all timber existing or yet to exist in the forest, and to produce all licenses and writs deemed necessary for the taking of the animals of the forest or the cutting of the timber by those not of the household of the castle as recognized by the laws of Sancrist, Palanthis, and all civilized lands.

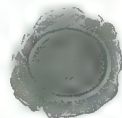
The undersigned, on this day, the seventh day of Fleurgreen of the year 8SC, do hereby witness, and by their signatures validate this document to be legally drawn according to the laws of Palanthis, Ergoth, Sancrist, and the Measure of the Knights of Solamnia.

(some illegible names scrawled, and one that can be read—Seamus Gavin)

Seamus Gavin *Seamus Gavin* *Seamus Gavin*

By signing below, I, Gunthar uth Wistan, do testify that this document correctly expresses my wishes.

Lord Gunthar uth Wistan
(Gunthar's signature)



GAETRUN OF SOLANTHUS

Archivist's note: This treatise concerning the art of eichelomancy was taken down from the spoken word by Gaetrún of Solanthus, who heard it directly from an elderly Qué-Shu man named Catchstar. Catchstar was a pupil of the Qué-Shu sage Oakheart, who developed the basic techniques of divining the future with a gourd cup and acorns. This unique system is practiced only by the Qué-Shu, though it resembles in some ways soothsaying with dice.

Catchstar affirms this is a truthful recollection of his introduction to the vanishing art of eichelomancy.

W

Catchstar speaks

Long ago, when I was young and the world was young with me, I was taken in hand by a spiritman of our people, Oakheart. Before I was a dream of my mother or my father, Oakheart was a great forester and a powerful hunter who ran down game on foot and slew them with a flint-head assegai. By his efforts alone the Qué-Shu people enjoyed plenty for more than twenty summers. In his fortieth summer, Oakheart heard tales of a mighty bull elk, said by many who saw it to be pure white in color, with horns as wide as the great south bay and black as onyx stone. Such a beast was without doubt a totem animal, a creature of spirit as great as its flesh, yet in his pride Oakheart pursued him, and on a crag near the city of Pax Tharkas, brought him to bay. The beast overtopped his hunter by the length of his neck and head, and his antlers spread farther than a tall man could step. White as a cloud, the elk's horns had fifty glittering black points. He ceased running and turned to face his pursuer.

The kingly bull spoke to Oakheart: "Why do you chase me, fellow? What harm have I done you?"

"No harm," admitted Oakheart. "But I would have your antlers as a trophy on the wall of my lodge."

The great elk's eyes flashed like shooting stars. "Trophy! If you would take my flesh to feed your family, I would willingly submit to the stroke of your weapon, but because you seek only a vain honor, you shall have nothing!"

He sprang at Oakheart, his great horns lowered. The Qué-Shu hunter hurled his short spear at the elk, but it slid off the animal's hide like water from a goose's wing. Surprised, Oakheart had no time to dodge the onrushing beast. The elk gored him badly in the chest, and two points of his black antlers pierced Oakheart's eyes, blinding him forever.

Oakheart would have died alone in the mountains, had not a party of dwarven surveyors come across him

lying bleeding on the path. They stopped his wounds and cared for him like a brother. Oakheart's great strength pulled him back to the land of the living, but he was left sightless. Leaning on a staff, he crept back to Qué-Shu, broken in spirit.

Now, the Qué-Shu admire strength and resource, and Oakheart's fall left him a helpless ward of the village. He passed his days with the old men, seated around the hearth of the great house. Eating little, and bitter in his heart, he shrank from a sturdy huntsman to a wizened, unkempt old man in a very short time.

Some turnings of the world passed, and Wanderer, who was himself a great hunter and tracker, came upon the trail of the black-horned elk. It was during a lean spring, when game was scarce and fruit was still in flower. Wanderer

knew by the enormous size of the tracks he'd found a rare elk. He raced ahead of the black-horned elk and climbed a likely tree. The sun was nearly sleeping when the great bull elk appeared. For a moment Wanderer was struck motionless by awe. Then he remembered the hungry people who were counting on him and drew an arrow back to his cheek. Because Wanderer was a humble, patient man, the gods guided his arrow to the elk's heart. The whole of the Qué-Shu people feasted on venison for four full days.

Wanderer presented the broad rack of horns to Oakheart as the blind man sat silently in the great house, refusing to eat the elk meat offered to him.

"Your injuries are avenged, Oakheart," Wanderer said, placing the old man's hand on the antlers.

Instead of being grateful, Oakheart responded, "Kill my enemy, will you? Who asked you to? You have stolen my honor! No one had the right to kill the great elk but me!" He continued on in a torrent of abuse. He insulted Wanderer and his lineage in disgraceful fashion. The Qué-Shu present were shocked, and many thought Wanderer should slay the vile-tongued old man, blind or not. Wanderer said nothing



FIGURE 1

to Oakheart's tirade but left him with the elk's horns. From that day, the Qué-Shu no longer spoke to Oakheart at all. Where they had sheltered him out of pity and fading respect, they now shunned him.

Without guides, Oakheart wandered away from the village, dragging the antlers. A storm rose, and he sought shelter under a wide oak tree deep in the forest. As the rain lashed at him, Oakheart began to see things in the flashes of lightning. He was wildly excited, because he had not see anything in many, many years.

Advancing toward him in the rain came a huge white stag, glowing with every stroke of lightning. It looked like the twin of the slain elk whose horns he grasped to his sunken chest. Oakheart did not welcome the great beast. He was afraid because he'd become weak and blind. Now that Wanderer had killed the black-horned elk, would his twin seek revenge against the first Qué-Shu he found?

The stag loomed over the cringing old man. "Why have you come here?" demanded the animal in a hollow, booming voice.

"Mercy, great spirit! I am an old, blind man, outcast by my people!"

"Oakheart, the famed hunter, an outcast? Why is this?"

Trembling in the cold downpour, he explained his fall from favor. "And so I am alone in the woods," Oakheart said, "of no use to myself or my people."

"Fear not, Oakheart. I am not your enemy. Because Wanderer has shown proper reverence of the hunted, your suffering is at an end," said the stag.

"Can you heal me, restore my sight?"

"No. Your eyes were forfeit because you offended my brother Chislev, and that judgment must stand. I, Zivilyn, can give you another way to see. Hold out your hands."

So saying, the stag raised his head until his horns were tangled in the lower branches. He shook his head, and a cascade of acorns fell to the sodden earth.

Three green nuts landed in Oakheart's cupped hands.

"With these you will see far," said Zivilyn (who is also known as the World Tree, and the Tree of Life). "Guard them well."

Lightning flared, and the stag receded into the shadows. Darkness returned to the old man's dead eyes. Oakheart called out, "Wait! What do I do?

How shall I see?" From the god there was no answer, and Oakheart knew he would have to teach himself to see, even as a child must learn to understand the things he sees. For days he sat under that same sacred tree, casting the acorns again and again on the bare earth. In his mind they were like bright stars that tumbled to his will, and gradually the pattern of their meaning became clear to him.

Oakheart returned to Qué-Shu and lived ever after on the edge of the village, separate yet sought after, as word of his prophetic powers spread. He took few pupils during his life, and I am proud to say I was one. He taught me many things about seeing the future with the three acorns. I shall try to relate now my first lessons with Zivilyn's prophetic seeds.

Seated outside his shabby bark and sapling hut, Oakheart was silent and motionless until my shadow fell across his face. He then began to shake three green acorns in a hollow gourd. He dumped them on the smooth dirt right at my feet.

Oakheart said, "A boy comes, with questions."

"My name is Catchstar, son of Greenleaf—"

"Your lineage is not important here. I know your name. Are you the boy who chases falling stars? You are? Have you ever found one?"

Used to being teased I said, "No, I haven't."

"Why do you try?"

"I want to know what the sky is made of and why parts of it fall."

Oakheart replied, "Why does anyone fall? Pride does it. A falling star is a spirit too proud for the gods. They banish the offender, and the spirit falls blazing

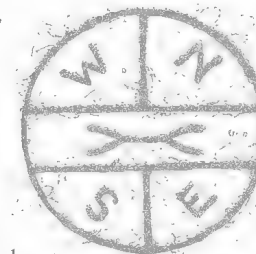


FIGURE 2

to earth." He picked up his acorns and returned them to the gourd. "You want to know the secret of the acorns?"

"Yes, master. Will you teach me?"

"I've never had a pupil who chased stars before . . . perhaps you have the eye for distant things this art requires. Sit down, and pay attention." I sat. Oakheart spilled the acorns on the ground between us.

"What do you see?"

"Three acorns."

"Is that all?"

I said yes, that was all.

"Stupid boy, look again. What do they look like? How do they lie?"

"Two lie close together near your ankle. The third is farther away, almost touching me. They're green acorns, with their caps on . . . you don't touch them at all, but use the gourd to scoop them up."

"Better. The art requires only green acorns be used. Once they begin to brown, they must be discarded and fresh green ones picked from a living tree."

"How do you know whether they're green or brown, master?" I blurted.

He regarded me sternly. "How would you tell, if you could not see?"

I pondered this awhile and suggested, by touch? By smell? Oakheart felt in the dust and found some dry acorns. He threw these on the ground amid his green ones, and bade me close my eyes and retrieve the brown ones only. I groped in the dirt and found the acorns, but they felt and smelled alike to me.

"You're half-clever, boy, for finding only half the answer—the wrong half. Here."

I opened my eyes and watched him unerringly pick the green acorns. He dropped them in his gourd and shook them around and around. When he spilt them on the ground again, he raked up the brown acorns and rattled them in the gourd.

"The brown acorns are much louder, master!"

"They are. Being dead, they are but bones, and rattle in the cup and against the earth like dead, dry

bones. Zivilyn lives through his trees. Because the god gives us sight through these small seeds, his eyes must be alive to see. Do you understand?"

I said I did.

He went on to explain that the message of the acorns depended on the "face" on which they were thrown. I asked him what he meant by "face."

"Look at me; know you my face?" I nodded. He slapped me lightly, more to startle me than to hurt me. "I cannot hear your head rattle!"

Chastened I said, "Yes, master, I can see your face."

"The life of every man and woman is written on their faces—eventually. A child's soft skin, a man's tanned brow, a woman's smooth cheek—all tell of the life they have already lived. If it were possible to look at their faces as they age, you'd know much about their lives in the meanwhile. So it is with the acorns. You must see figures in the dirt before you cast, and where the acorn comes to rest tells you something about the question you've asked."

Puzzled, I asked, "Should I draw in the dirt?"

"No, foolish boy! Are you so bereft of feeling you must draw what can be seen with the mind?"

He explained there were just five diagrams, or faces as he called them, I needed to know. Any question a person could ask could be explained with the five faces.

"Hark well, star-chaser: You must always use the five faces in the same order, every time. If you skip one, or start over, you will fall into error."

"But what if the questioner has only three questions?"

"You must start where you leave off, and resume where you stop. If a woman asks just one question in the beginning, start with the first face, 'the Universe.' Your next question, no matter who asks it, must be cast upon the second face, 'the World.' You must cycle endlessly through the five faces as long as you live. If you lose your way or forget a step, you are lost."

"What are the five faces, master?" I said, leaning



FIGURE 3

forward intently.

He raked in his acorns and swept the dead brown nuts away. "I will draw each just once for you. The size is not important, nor do the lines mean anything. Only the regions count—remember that. Commit them to your heart, for I shall never mark them out again."

With unerring accuracy he traced a large circle in the dust. He slashed two lines across it, dividing into four equal pieces, like segments of a griddle cake [see Figure 1]. "This is the Universe," Oakheart said, holding his dry, knobby hand over the image. "This part is heaven." He indicated the quarter farthest from him. "Here is the Vault of the underworld." This was the part nearest to him. He moved his hand to his right. "The dry land." To his left: "The sea."

I opened my mouth with a question, but he brusquely cut me off. "Do not insult me by asking if these are literal names or not! This face represents the four parts of the universe. Where the acorns fall, how they fall, answers the first question, whatever it may be."

Oakheart raised his voice to a higher pitch, mimicking a seeker. "What will the weather be come mid-summer?" He gave the acorns a single stir and inverted the gourd over the diagram. One acorn each fell in the Sea, the Vault, and the Land.

"A simple answer," Oakheart said. "There will be much rain; the land will be sodden, even to the lowest places. Do you see?"

I did see. It seemed perfectly clear. I reached out to gather up the acorns, but the old seer slapped my hand aside. "Don't handle my seeds, boy. You shorten their life by touching them." With a deft motion, he swept them into the gourd. Smoothing out the dirt, he drew a fresh circle, the same size as before. Two parallel lines split the circle, and with short strokes he divided the top and bottom slices in two [see Figure 2].

"This is the World," Oakheart said. "The North

(the top right portion), the West (top left), the South (bottom left), and the East (bottom right). The land in the middle is the Valley, in the midst of all endeavors."

"May I ask a question?" He nodded, gourd poised. "Who shall I have for my wife?" I was young, and girls were much in my mind, and I deliberately formed a question I thought had nothing to do with directions or valleys. Oakheart shook the gourd twice and spilled the acorns on the new "face."

Two fell in the Valley, one in the South. I saw no meaning in that, but Oakheart cocked his head and grunted.

"You will not marry. Not ever," he said.

"What! How do you reason that, master?"

"Two seeds in a single part of a face mean a forceful answer, stronger than one seed. Three acorns in one area are a negation of that area, and no acorns means the part is protected by the god.

Hence two acorns in the Valley, the midst of all things, means you will spend most of your life apart from others."

I didn't understand him. "And the seed in the South?"

"The South is the region of solitude, as the North is the place of violence and difficulty, the East is the land of serenity, and the West of fertility. All these things save solitude will be withheld from you."

I was stunned for a while. Oakheart sat silently, scarcely moving. After a long time, I drew in a breath to speak. He anticipated me and said, "The third face is the Face." He obscured the World and created a new circle. In this ring he scratched an outline like a butterfly's wings. That left four spaces around the edge of the circle, and two in the center [see Figure 3].

"Look on this as your own face, in a mirror, so all directions are reversed." The outermost segment on the right was the Left Ear. On the opposite side was the Right Ear. The left hand inner box was the Right Eye, the right box the Left Eye. The bottom segment was the Chin, the top one the Brow.



FIGURE 4

"Ask," he said. I didn't want to put any more questions just then, but his sightless stare bore down my will to remain silent.

"How long will I live?" I said feebly.

Oakheart rattled the gourd thrice, and scattered the acorns across the diagram. All three came to rest in the Left Eye, though spaced apart from each other.

"Is it bad?" I said anxiously, leaning over the strange diagram.

"How bad can it be? One's life is measured by the gods—it is so long, and then it ends."

"But how long will I live?" I almost shouted.

"Longer than your father—three times longer. The Left Eye is the side of the heart, which beats as we live, and it is the eye the watchful parent spares for his children while he toils with his right hand," Oakheart said.

Now my father died in forest fire when he was thirty summers old. I am not six-and-seventy, so by Oakheart's reckoning I have fourteen more years of life.

"Are you pleased with the length of your life?" he asked.

"Yes, master, but I don't understand how you find meaning in these images. What would the answer have been if all the acorns had turned up in the Right Eye, or the Brow, or the Chin?"

He turned his sightless eyes toward me, a habit of his I found disconcerting. "If the sun doesn't rise tomorrow, how bright will it be? Alternate answers mean nothing."

His leathery fingers, like talons, erased the Face and scratched out the fourth image, the Eye. [See Figure 4] I noticed the faces were getting smaller and closer all the time—Universe, World, Face, Eye. I said as much to Oakheart.

"Exactly so, star-chaser, you're not as dense as you act. Just as Zivilyn peered into my wretched soul that day in the mountains, so do the acorns penetrate the soul of the seeker and the sage.

"The Eye is made up of its natural parts—the Lid, the Lash, the White, the Pupil, and the Tears. What question will you ask now?"

I was afraid to peer into anything important, so I laughed and said, "What will I have for dinner tonight?" I thought Oakheart might rebuke me for making a frivolous query, but he solemnly rotated the gourd four times and poured the acorns on the ground. One lay on the Lid, one on the White, and one in the Tears.

"Catfish," he said. "You will not catch it yourself, though. It will be provided."

"Jest not, master! How do you see 'catfish' in this?"

He thrust his blind visage close to mine and said in a low voice, "Because I am the seer of the acorns, boy!" He stabbed his forefinger into the Lid. "This means, in this question, you will have flesh to eat."

Rapidly he shifted his pointing finger to the Tears. "It will swim in water, like tears." He juttied a thumb at the White. "As the eye sees through the pupil and not the white, so you will not see the fish before you eat it."

It made sense the way he explained it, but I was ridden with doubt about my own ability to interpret the seeds. I had one tiny objection, and said, "Why cat fish, master? Where do the acorns tell you that?"

"They don't," he snapped. "What season is it? Not yet spring? What fish of eatable size are found in the streams hereabouts this time of year?"

"Catfish . . ."

"So they are. A seer cannot expect the gods to deliver the future to him like a lodge tapestry, all woven out in fine detail. The seer must take the clues the gods offer and fit them into what he already knows. The pattern is there, if you can but see it. Don't mistake it for a map or a scroll. The gods are more subtle than that."

"So reading the acorns is just a matter of how you see things?"

"No, no! The signs are always plain! You must train



FIGURE 5

yourself to understand them, not make them mean what you want them to mean."

The sun was sinking below the rim of the western hills. Oakheart stretched his stiffening limbs and cleared the dirt before him one last time. He made a circle, and drew a complex figure with seven segments [see Figure 5].

"The last face is the Heart, the seat of the soul," he said, a trace of weariness edging the impatience out of his voice. "The greatest parts of life are found here: love and hate, health and sickness, misery and happiness. Running through the midst of all these is life itself," he said. I opened my mouth to utter a final question, but Oakheart held up a hand to forestall me. "This question is mine."

"How long will I live?" He shook the gourd five times and raised it high, letting the acorns plummet to the ground. I thought they would bounce away, falling from such a height, but the soft dirt held them where they fell. They formed a straight diagonal line, running through the sections of Sickness, Life, and Happiness.

Quietly he said, "Interpret for me, Catchstar."

I studied the three green seeds, trying to impress their meaning on my empty mind. They were equally spaced, so I decided that meant their message was equally balanced between them. Sickness. Life. Happiness. What did they mean? I glanced up from the pattern in the dirt to my master and saw him tremble slightly in the cooling air. For the first time I saw him not as Oakheart, legendary hunter and sage, but as a frail old man.

Sickness. Life. Happiness. Three equally spaced acorns.

It came to me in an instant. It was suddenly so clear and so obvious I knew Oakheart saw it too. The words caught in my throat.

"Speak," he said.

"You will live . . ." I swallowed the lump that had risen in my throat. "You will live three days more."

"Explain"

"I see three acorns spaced apart the width of their own bodies, like three suns separated by three nights. The first lies on Sickness, which I take to mean you

are ill." Things grew sharper even as I spoke. "No, you are sick of living." I looked up at Oakheart, wary of signs of temper. He said nothing.

"The middle acorn lies on Life, which I see as signifying a change, a transition from your weariness to something else. And the third nut is in Happiness, the ultimate end you are seeking. What is the happiest answer to your question? That your life will soon be over."

Wind stirred the silent clearing. The tattered cloth that served as the door of Oakheart's hut flapped slowly.

"I agree with your reading," he said. With great deliberation, he gathered the acorns into the gourd and handed them to me. "These are yours now. Forget not to replace them with green ones once they age." He stood, his sinewy arms and legs unfolding. Oakheart was tall, even as a stooped old man. In his youth, he must have been a giant.

"Farewell, Catchstar," he said. "Ask the elders to come here in three days, will you? But not before. I will read the signs no more. It's your job now."

He turned to enter his ramshackle hut. "But master!" I protested. "I know so little! How can I hope to follow your path as a seer?"

He did not look back, but shuffled under the waving doorflap. "Be right only half the time," he said with a dry chuckle, "and they will believe you more than if you always tell the truth."

Oakheart disappeared into his dark hut. I called to him many times, but he did not emerge again.

On the third day, the elders of the Qué-Shu went to the cold, silent hut and found Oakheart dead, seated by his rough fieldstone hearth. The fire had gone out long before and the old man lacked the strength or the will to rekindle it. The hut was barren, for Oakheart owned nothing but the rags on his back.

Clenched in his hand were three acorns, brown as the earth and dry as dust.

Here ends the narrative of Catchstar, also called Catchflea





AS TOLD BY CARAMON MAJERE,
AND ELABORATED BY BERTREM THE AESTHETIC

As you may be aware, the Great Library of the Ages recently published and distributed An Ansalonian Bestiary, a guide to indigenous fauna penned by noted adventurer Caramon Majere. It was my distinct privilege to consult with the author during the writing of this tome, and my honor to serve as editor and annotator (providing footnotes on earlier, more academic writings on the creatures at hand).

As work on the Bestiary concluded we humbly anticipated a modest groundswell of support (and more importantly sales) from explorers, treasure seekers, novice woodsmen, and others who make their livelihoods in the wild places of the world. After all, the author spent years traveling in the most dangerous places known, his reminiscences and advice would surely prove useful to those who hoped to survive such experiences and live to the venerable age Caramon has reached. We were not, however, prepared for the popularity of the book among the more genteel and urbane circles of Ansalonian society.

Whether this acceptance is due to genuine interest in the subject at hand, nostalgia associated with the author's reputation, or merely some whim of popular fancy I cannot say. However, the fact remains that even with the somewhat dubious aid of the "printing machine" designed by Spinner, the most capa-

ble gnome in my acquaintance, the demand for the Bestiary still far outstrips the available supply.

Spinner assures me, her machine will be fully functional again soon, and we can have more copies of the manuscript within a month.

Meanwhile, residing in Palanthas for as long as I have, some of the sensibilities and acumen of the local merchants find their way into my otherwise scholarly mind. If the people want the Bestiary but cannot have it, I reason, then let us provide them with a small sample that will whet their appetites and increase demand even more.

This folio consists of previously unpublished excerpts from the author's musings. Most were omitted from the original text due to a codification problem: They fall under the category of flora rather than fauna. Simple space considerations prevented the inclusion of a comprehensive field guide to the plants of Ansalon, and the author and I determined it best to leave that subject open for a tome of its own should popularity warrant it.

One animal in particular, however, fell out of the final manuscript wholly at the author's behest. It seems he does not consider his experience to be representative of the species as a whole. However, for this special edition Caramon has given his consent to include this entry that originally resided in the section quaintly titled "Giant Bugs."

GIANT SLUGS

If you spend enough time crawling through caves and deserted castles, you'll find that somewhere on Ansalon there's a deadly version of just about every creature. The trick is that they're only deadly if you decide to fight them. Take the giant slug for example.

It's hard to imagine a more helpless creature than a slimy slug, oozing its way around the forest eating leaves and bark. There are, I know from experience, giant versions of these disgusting little bugs to be found in dark, dank, remote places—places that civilized folk only visit once or twice a decade. They are nothing more than tremendous versions of the garden slugs we all know and hate, but sheer size makes them quite deadly.

First of all, they have mouths filled with . . . well, not teeth really, but very strong gums. A giant slug bite could probably crush a man's head, and could certainly tear his arm from the socket. More important, though, is that as they grow bigger, their ooze grows stronger. It'll stick to cloth, leather, and even some metals and take hours of washing to clean out. Not only that, but it stinks like rotting leaves. The giant bug's spit, though, burns to the touch and nothing can



stand up to it. I've seen it eat through good steel like it was soft cheese, and turn a man's hand into a useless blackened stump in less time than I can describe it.

Make no mistake, these are deadly animals. But the thing of it is, you *never* have to fight one. Well, not if you're clever that is. But sometimes when you're in the midst of an adventure, your heart overrules your brain.

The first time I saw a giant slug was when my brother and Tanis and the rest were sneaking into Pax Tharkas. We had plenty of warning; the creature is not quiet or subtle. Yet when it came crashing through the door we were all pretty surprised. (Sometimes I wonder how we survived those early days. Paladine must watch out for youthful idealists.)

Our first instinct, you'll not be surprised to hear, was to attack it. We soon found out that a slug is much less helpless when it's thirty feet long and six feet thick! Our blades bounced off it, all except Sturm's huge sword. And even Raist's magic only made it madder.

It was a terrible fight. The slug was spitting acid everywhere, I even think it hit someone (thank the gods that Mishikal granted Goldmoon a healing touch), and we could do nothing to dissuade the thing. I remember Tanis yelling for everyone to fall back. I likewise remember Sturm and my frantic reply of "It'll just come after us!" as we pressed the attack in vain. What fools we were—that was Tanis's whole point!

The slug was quite fast in close quarters. It could whip its body around quick as lightning. But once we moved away from it the beast couldn't keep up with us at all. In fact, when we gained even a little distance Tanis was able to spear the thing in the mouth and convince it to find less troublesome food elsewhere.

Remember that as you go through your own adventures. Sometimes the smartest thing you can do is run away.

The author's assertion that the only difference between common slugs and their gigantic cousins' size and power is refuted by only one fact: Ordinary slugs eat only plants while the immense kind are clearly carnivorous. An argument can certainly be made for this change being one of necessity. After all, such a large creature would quickly deforest any area in an effort to sustain itself. The

choice, if in fact any conscious effort applies at all, is simple: Eat meat or die.

He is correct, though, in saying that these creatures can appear any- and everywhere. According to available sources, they actually are merely mutations of garden slugs. The reason these creatures only appear in remarkably remote areas is that as they grow they become likely prey for all manner of birds, rodents, and other small carnivores. Unable to defend themselves, the slugs rarely survive to reach their full size unless they do so out of sight of any possible danger. Of course, once they do reach maturity, the slugs must immediately search out more populated hunting grounds or they starve.

PLANTS

Not every danger you face in the wild will be as obvious as a charging boar or a howling wolf. In fact, sometimes you cannot tell the forest from the trees—or the trees from the monsters.

One of the earliest lessons I remember my father teaching me is what berries never to eat and which patches of grass not to roll through. I also recall how clearly that lesson came back to me after I'd played in an itch-weed patch. The forest is filled with plants that have no good use in the civilized world. Elves will tell you it's nature's way of keeping "the younger races" from plowing under every meadow and building a city on every patch of flat land. I think it's just the way of the world.

Everything has a good and bad side to it. And no matter how nice the good side is, watch out when you come up against the bad. I mean, a rose still smells sweet even when you prick your thumb on the thorns.

The author makes an interesting point, though I am not sure it is the one he intended. The flora of Ansalon is more than a simple tableau for the comings and goings of the various animals of the world (both intelligent and wild). The fact that a forest makes the perfect home for innumerable species does nothing to change the fact that the forest itself is a community made up of millions of individual entities, each trying to eke out a life of its own.

There is as much variety among the plant kingdom as in the animal, indeed perhaps more. No one should be surprised that some of those plants are deadly, in fact occasionally hostile to the intelligent races.

MEMORY MOSS

Believe it or not there are plants out there that can affect your brain. Oh, I don't mean herbs and roots that make you see flying cooshee. No, I mean a plant that can get into your head just by you walking nearby. Can you believe it? Well, what would you say if I told you that you might already have seen such a plant only you don't remember it?

It's called memory moss, and it eats your thoughts leaving you with a dull headache and no memory of the last day or so. You feel disoriented and can't remember how you got where you are or what happened to any equipment, clothing, or even friends who are no longer with you. All in all, it's a lot like waking up after a very long night of celebrating (something, I'm sad to say, I know too much about).

Memory moss is a fuzzy, black plant that grows on rocks and trees. Each patch is a separate colony, but you'll rarely find more than one growth in the same area—I think the plants would constantly sap one another if they grew too close together. You can find them mostly in the jungles of Karthay and Nordmaar. Strangely enough, though, I hear tales that it also grows in Nightlund, although I find that hard to understand. The plant usually needs a lot of light in able to spread, and sunlight is something Nightlund sees almost none of, being stuck in a perpetual state of dusk. My son tells me that the plant is intelligent and quite evil, though, so maybe it's chosen Nightlund as a home, drawn there, like so many other unsavory and undead creatures, by the unspeakable evil in Dargaard Keep.

No matter where you find it, however, the moss is not some random force of nature, it really does think for itself. Each patch can only sap the mind of one person at a time, and it always chooses the smartest member of your party (usually a spellcaster). If you don't know that memory moss is in the area, you might just pass through and never know that anything went wrong—in fact, the trip will seem very short indeed as whole days disappear from your recollection.

If you plan to travel in areas known to be home to memory moss, be sure to write down all the important information you learn during your adventures.

Otherwise you'll just have to go do it all over again when the moss eats your memories. Should you think this has happened to you, though, there is one way to get back your memories—swallow the moss that sapped them. The plant is safe to eat, though it tastes dry and terribly bitter.

I'd love to tell you some tale about my experiences with memory moss, but the truth is that I've never actually seen the stuff—at least, I don't remember ever seeing it.

As improbable as such a plant seems, its existence has been quite painstakingly documented (probably because of researchers' fears of the subject sapping away their findings before they can share them). Scholars generally refer to the moss as "obliviax," and though they have determined the extent of its abilities they have no solid theories as to its origins.

Colonies of obliviax constantly probe their immediate area (approximately fifty feet in any direction) for intelligent creatures. Whenever one comes within range of the plant's powers, it repeatedly attempts to suck away thoughts and memories until the subject leaves or the attack succeeds. If successful, the moss becomes completely inactive for a period of roughly one day (although research is inconclusive, most scholars believe that the length of dormancy is directly proportional to the amount of memory absorbed).

Mages, alchemists, and herbalists use obliviax in many different potions, poultices, and concoctions. It can be used for everything from a draught to cause forgetfulness to an elixir that temporarily restores the memories of the forgetful or senile.

SHIMMERWEED

I've heard scholars and poets say that true beauty is hypnotic. Well, I'm not so certain about that. I mean, I truly believe that no creature on earth is more beautiful than my own loving wife, but no matter how lovely she is, I was never hypnotized by her. Captured, yes. Stunned, not once.

There is, however, a plant that can entirely bewitch any person that gazes at it. It's called a shimmerweed, and it grows along the eastern edges of Qualinesti and occasionally in small groves along the Abanasinian plains. The shimmerweed gets its name from its flower, a great fluffy poof of a thing that seems to have bits of crystal woven within. In bright sunlight the flower is

difficult to look at, but in the soft glow of moonlight it makes a dazzling display of sparkles and rainbows. These lights are hypnotic, and anyone who looks at them is likely to become completely entranced and unable to look away for any reason.

I know, you're thinking, "How bad can that be? Sounds pretty nice, all things considered." Well, you won't think it's so nice when a wolf sneaks up on you while you're completely spellbound and begins gnawing on your leg! Yes, local predators know about the shimmerweed's powers (dumb animals seem to be unaffected by the lights) and often hunt near the area on clear evenings hoping for an easy meal.

The thing is, these plants are very fragile. Touching them with anything but the softest leather gloves (you'd better wear gloves, because the crystal petals can slice your hand open) will cause the flowers to shatter and rain down on the ground in a shower of tiny tinkling diamonds. And if you shine a bright light on them suddenly, say while they're sparkling in the moonlight, they explode. This causes the crystals to fly off in every direction, cutting and scratching anyone standing near the patch.

Maybe the thing to learn from the shimmerweed is not that beauty is hypnotic, but rather that it's dangerous!

The shimmerweed is the only known plant that actually generates crystalline growth within its petals. The crystals are more fragile than any found in the earth, but they are nonetheless quite beautiful. Gem cutters have for years tried to find a way to incorporate shimmerweed lattices into brooches and rings. However, once removed from the plant the crystals collapse at the slightest touch.

As the author indicates, the plants can be found in Abanasinia and Qualinesti, but reports of similar plants also come from Silvanesti, the Estwilde, and Schallsea Isle (though not all of these species appear to have the hypnotic effect of the shimmerweed). The plants grow in stands of a dozen or more, and each stalk may reach heights of up to two feet (though most never grow higher than a foot and a half). Research also indicates that the more plants there are in a given patch, the stronger their hypnotic effect.

TANGLESHOOT

When I first told Bertrem that I wanted to do an entry for tangleshoot he looked quite confused. This wasn't terribly strange. At that point we were still just beginning our work on this book and we hadn't gotten to know one another well enough. As time went on he still gave me those looks, but only because they always made me laugh (he looks just like a pup who can't figure out who's calling his name).

Anyway, this time he gave me that look because he really didn't know what I was talking about. "Tangleshoot?" he asked.

"Yeah," I said. "You know, those snaky vines in the woods all around town."

He said he'd seen them. "One assumes they are called 'tangleshoots' because they grow in such disarray."

He has such a way with words!

"No. C'mon, let's go down to the forest and I'll show you how they get their name."

Well, we get there and I tell him to go step on a really thick bunch of the vines—and he does! The next thing he knows the tangleshoot wraps itself around his ankles and pulls him off his feet. The harder he struggles (and he puts up a pretty good fight for an old bookworm) the more the vines wrap around him. Before long he's wrapped up tight as a Yule gift and cursing like an Ergothian sailor.

Of course, by this time I'm laughing so hard that I can hardly see straight. As I go over to cut him free I accidentally step on a big pile of the vines myself and the next thing I know we're both trussed up and lying nose to nose. Now it's my turn to curse because I dropped my knife and can't do anything to get either one of us free. Just when I'm about to get really creative I notice that Bertrem has started laughing, and suddenly the whole thing is funny again. When Tika came down about fifteen minutes later we were both still laughing so hard that the ground beneath our heads was damp with our tears.

After that, Bertrem and I relaxed around one another and writing the book became a lot more fun. You have to be able to laugh at yourself, you know, if you're going to write something that other people are going to read.

One can only say that the author has a singular sense of humor. What he fails to mention, though, is that the incident provoked a long and thoughtful discussion of similar plants throughout Ansalon. Similar species of ground vines can be found in forests and jungles across the continent. They bear various names: tangleweed, stranglevine, choke creeper. But we also identified several related plants.

A tree whose branches occasionally reach out and grab unwary passersby is called a black willow by the centaurs of the western Plains of Dust, while the reclusive inhabitants of Claren Elian call it a garrote tree.

Perhaps the most interesting variation, though, can be found in the jungles of Karthay. It is a ground dwelling plant known as the pitfall, but rather than snake along the jungle floor this plant burrows out a hole in which to grow. When it reaches maturity its vines and leaves cover the hole, creating the illusion of solid ground. When an animal walks steps on the foliage it falls headlong into the trap. The pitfall then contracts its vines holding the victim tight and drains it of blood and life.

FUNGI

When we sat down to write this section I had to tell Bertrem that I didn't have a clue what we would put in it. I didn't know that a mushroom is a fungus and so is every type of jelly, ooze, pudding and slime you can think of. And really, I don't think it matters to the person out in the world. You don't need to know that puffballs (those weird pink things that blow seeds into your face if you get too close) aren't really plants—you just need to know to stay away from them.

But Bertrem insisted: The difference, he said, is very important in his circle, and it's important to me that this book be useful to as many people as possible. Besides, I don't want to seem like an ignorant clod.

Anyway, I finally came up with a good suggestion he shot it down completely! I've heard tales about a race of little mushroom men who live in the deepest dwarven warrens. Cragg Krumbletoe used to tell me about them when he stopped by to sell me his finest dwarven ales. In fact, I think I even caught a glimpse of them once or twice. But Bertrem says that they're too "unverifiable" to include in this book, and I guess he knows what he's talking about.

Although legends and rumors persist regarding a fungoid race (referred to as "myconids" in the most reputable sources), the author's only experience with these "mushroom men" comes from a period in his life when he was, shall we say, overindulgent in his revelry. I make no attempt to cast aspersions on the veracity of the author's tales, he has certainly seen many beasts that every scholar in my acquaintance believed were long dead (chief among them dragons themselves). However, with the limited space available in this tome, I would be remiss in my duties if I were to allow him to include this creature rather than one that is more easily authenticated.

GELATINOUS CUBE

I've seen several types of plants that move around from place to place, but the strangest of all looks like a giant block of slimy jelly. We don't have a word for it in the common tongue, and the dwarven name is hard to say without straining your throat, but Bertrem tells me that scholars call this a gelatinous cube. I think that's too big a name for such a simple creature, but who am I to argue with the wisdom of scholars?

Anyway, this cube oozes along underground passageways—caves mostly, but they love getting into dungeons and other man- and dwarf-made buildings—eating every living thing they come in contact with. The absorb everything they pass over and digest everything that isn't made of metal (for some reason they can't eat that, though every other material the gods ever made is fair game).

I don't know where these creatures come from (I've never seen or even heard of a baby one), but if you see one it's best to simply get out of its way. The cubes are mindless and simply move down hallways and into rooms at random, so they will never actually attack you. If you're trapped by one, though, you'd best fight with all your might because they will also never spare you.

Be careful where and how you touch a cube. It's covered in slime that numbs your limbs and freezes your brain. If you fall prey to its powers you'll just stand there rooted to the spot while the cube moves over you and until you're completely surrounded by it. Then it starts to eat you—all the while you're awake

and helpless. A terrible way to go. In the end, the only way your friends will be able to recognize you is by the empty armor that's left floating in the cube.

If you do have to fight a cube, I'd recommend heavy bashing weapons and torches. They're pretty resistant to many types of magic but they burn as easily as the next plant. However, if you really want to mess one up, have a spellcaster use cold-based magic on it. The cold slows the cube down to half its usual speed and keeps it from eating as quickly as it would like. I hear that a cold cube seems takes twice as long to eat whatever is in its gut.

When the cube is dead you can reach in and pull out the remains of its meals without worry. I know a couple of very unsavory merchants who, when caught with a suspicious piece of merchandise, will claim that their servants found it floating in a cube somewhere.

Several texts claim that gelatinous cubes are the result of a gnomish experiment designed to make a creature that would automatically clean up the workshop after a long day of inventing. If these stories are to be believed, the gnomes worked long and hard to cross-breed a weakened strain of gray ooze with a plant magically retrieved from an plane of reality wholly filled with gelatinous beasts. The resulting creature was both larger and more uncontrollable than the gnomes expected, and it immediately absorbed its creators before they could banish it back to that extra-dimensional place.

Dwarven folktales, on the other hand, say that the center of the world is filled with these creatures who are eating their way toward the surface of Krynna slowly but surely. One day, the tales tell, the dwarves will wage war with the gelatinous cubes to decide the fate of the world.

These fungi serve as the butt of a particularly unfunny joke among antiquarians. When a particular relic remains lost despite all evidence pointing to a specific location, the exasperated researcher can often be heard to exclaim, "I'm sure it was here until that gelatinous cube came by!"

SHRIEKERS

I've met very few plants that can really be called dangerous all on their own. Some can poison you, and a few will attack you, but only one that I can think of can get you into trouble the way a shrieker can.

These odd little mushrooms grow in cool, damp caves and sometimes in the deepest darkest dungeons. Unlike the growths that we sometimes use to flavor our stew here at the Inn, shriekers do not always sit in one place and wait for you to come along and pick them. They wander from place to place, looking for a spot with rich, moist soil. They stay there until the ground becomes too dry, then wander off again.

The thing about these mushrooms is that they're very sensitive to light. If you get within ten feet of one and you're carrying a torch or lantern, it starts to scream like an animal caught in a trap. First of all, the sound hurts. I mean you want to drop everything and cover your ears before your head splits. But more dangerous by far is the fact that every predator in the cave or dungeon knows the signal of the plant and that fresh meat is nearby. Lizards, worms, trolls, and every other hunter in the cavern come running when a shrieker starts making noise. The minute you set one of these mushrooms to screaming, you'd best head the other way as quickly as possible. If you're lucky the beasts honing in on the sound will only find one another and they'll start fighting over the right to hunt you.

Sometimes dwarf (or even kobold or goblin) communities will plant shriekers around the borders of their towns and pen them in. The plants then act as a kind of sentry system, warning the folks of approaching enemies.

So far as scholarly texts are concerned, the ability to take the normal process of photosynthesis and use it to generate sound is an ability unique to the shrieker. At first it seems as though this audible power is best used as a defense from possible predators. The fact is the shrieker is a bland, tasteless fungus that is mildly toxic to most mammals. Therefore it has more efficacious modes of defense.

A dwarf scholar points out, though, that shriekers tend to settle in areas infested with other, more dangerous plants (such as violet fungi, which spray acidic secretions on passersby) indicates that the noise might be part of a symbiotic relationship. The shrieker makes noise, startling nearby prey which the other fungi attack, and they all reap the benefits of soil fed by the decomposition of the slain animal.



*by Brother Vincent Adibisi,
Faunal Specimens Subdept., Acquisitions Dept.,
Academic Branch, Library of Palanthas*

*To: Miletus Lozone,
Chair, Acquisitions Subdept.,
Academic Branch, Library of Palanthas*

14 Yurthgreen, 352AC

Dear Sir,

I am pleased to report that my mission goes well. The battle resulting in the liberation of Kalaman provided an excellent opportunity to gather the information Lorekeeper Astinus charged us with obtaining. As the enclosed journal indicates, we now know more about dragon anatomy than ever before. In light of some of this new information, Brother Maynard in the Bureau of Nomenclature may have some revisions to make. The original mission of gathering biological data also has brought to light some interesting behavioral and ethological information on dragons. An elderly female bronze dragon, injured badly in the fighting, spent much of the aftermath of the battle helping me examine the corpses of those chromatic dragons that died in battle. Her strength (even though she was born several hundred years before the Cataclysm) allowed me to move the bodies so that I could examine them from various angles. The corpses' wounds (from the battle as well as from the impact of crashing) provided an excellent opportunity to examine some of the internal structures. My notes include sketches, but alas, I am a mere field scribe; the late Sister Gillian of the Art Department, Gilean Bless her, would undoubtedly have been able to do these great beasts more justice. I also attempted to examine the bodies of those Good dragons who died in battle, but my Bronze companion forbade it. This is understandable but disappointing. The surviving dragons from the Army of the Whitestone were cooperative for the most part and helped provide much of the behavioral data I gathered. Apocrypha Cozzlinius, the elder Bronze wyrmess who assisted me with my research, has decided to fly with me to Palanthas, as she has never seen the Great Library, and apparently she occupies an historian role in her own society. This means, however, that I will be leaving my horse behind (assure Morten in the stables that she is in good hands), but I hope my contribution to dragon lore will make up for the financial loss of such a fine steed.

I shall return to Palanthas within a fortnight. Praise to Gilean and Chislev.

Best Regards,
Vincent Adibisi, Brother of Gilean

NOTES ON THE SAMPLES AND SOURCES

As noted, I was unable to examine the bodies of the metallic dragons who perished in the battle. Thus, conclusions on internal anatomy are drawn only from chromatic specimens. However, given the overall

external morphological similarities between chromatic and metallic dragons, the internal features are probably also highly similar if not identical. The sample consisted of the following:

CHROMATIC DRAGON CORPSES

One Red Dragon

Judging from the markings and its size, probably an Ancient Female, (although it was partially decomposed and submerged in a nearby river, where it lay for several days before I could convince several silver dragons to haul it out). It had a black mane, wing spikes tipped red, and black claws.

Sources and descriptions indicate at least two other red dragon clans:

Clan 2—red manes, black tipped horns and spikes, and black belly plates.

Clan 3—short red beards, dual row of spinal spikes-black tipped, claws black tipped. (This is a description of Ember/Pyros—the mount of Dragonarmy Highlord Verminaard—provided by the kender Tasslehoff Burrfoot and corroborated by Lauranalanthasa of the royal house of Qualinost.)

Four Blue Dragons

One Juvenile Female: gray, white, and black fetlocks, grayish beards.

Two Adult Males (judging by markings, the two are related): medium length spinal crests, blue beard (short), yellow eyes.

One Ancient Male: blue bands (dark/lighter) on superior surface of body, neck, and tail, horns pointing down at tips, back mane with alternating length (short/medium) crests.

One Green Dragon

Adult Female with red eyes, a head fin/sail, twin small horns on the side of head, one small horn on snout, large sail on small of back, short white beard.

White Dragons

All information on this subspecies was gathered during an interview with Lauranalanthasa from her observations of Sleet, the mount of the Dark Elf Dragonarmy Highlord Feal-Thas. Sleet is blue-eyed, has four short horns, one central long horn, and all the horns are white with blue tips. Sleet has

black spinal fur, a single row of white spinal spikes, and a white underbelly.

METALLIC DRAGON INTERVIEWEES

The names in parentheses are the names humans use, the others being the closest possible translations of the draconic clan names.

Leader of the Metallic Dragon forces:

Ausirien Blackmane, Gold Dragon: six short black horns on superior surface of skull, black mane and spinal fur, black fur on inferior surface of lower limbs (fetlocks).

Gold Dragons

Auralantha (Corona) Coronis: six short golden head spikes pointing in many directions, red mane and spinal fur. The surname means "rising sun" as the head adornments suggest.

Conflavius (Sunshadow) Leviano: six short black horns, golden mane and spinal fur, tail sails/fins.

Azandio (Firewing) Pyros: red beard and fetlocks, leading edge of wings with red fur, medial line of underbelly furred.

Silver Dragons

Novus (Nova) and Kohin (Star) Borealis, their paternal Uncle Luunor (Eclipse): black manes, black spine fur, silver spine spikes, black fetlock fur, white fur streak on forehead, blending into the mane.

Sochrinia (Moonlight) Lothen: gray and white mane, black claws and horns, white fur on trailing edge of wing.

Nagada (Shimmer) Silshauri: no fur, black horns, tan underbelly, no spinal ridge.

Bronze Dragons

Apocrypha Cozzlinius (the one that helped me): black mane, black horns, green eyes.

Leona (Reaver) Smilodes: enlarged upper shearing teeth, head crest, three short snout horns, two

short horns laterally next to crest, no fur on body.
Milos (Thunder) Patinu: greenish cast to scale edges, long lateral twisting horns, white beard.

Apophis (Storm) Hamillo: dual neck crests, no horns, red eyes, white spinal fur, dual row of black spinal spikes.

Archimedian (Sunset) Tallusia: long white beard, horns curved forward (perhaps covering or protecting eyes?), spine crests.

Brass Dragons

Castagir (Flash) Miru: short brown beard, single row of spine spikes, spiraled horns (present on all brass dragons). Thiabe (Sundown) Araben: black horns, black belly plates, black claws. Nulenwa (Morningstar) Komorkis: dark brown belly plates, brown spine fur.

Copper Dragons

The deaths of the only two copper dragons at the battle prevented me from gaining much information about them beyond the following:

- 1) The two were twin females.
- 2) They are credited with the slaying of the red dragon female. Apocrypha indicated that this red female was responsible for the theft of the two copper dragons' egg clutches. The two were not named, as is dragon custom (see notes on behavior).

TEETH AND DENTITION

Examination of corpses of chromatic dragons and of living metallic dragon subjects yielded the following generalizations* regarding dentition:

- 1) morphologically, there are two types of dragon teeth: cutting and grinding.
- 2) grinding teeth are found only in those draconic subspecies with omnivorous dietary patterns.

FOOTNOTES

*These generalizations may not apply to all draconic subspecies. The limited numbers available in the sample (less than ten chromatic dragon corpses examined and less than twenty metallic dragons interviewed or examined), could affect conclusions, as could the fact that not all subspecies were represented. Notable absences include copper dragons,

- 3) within the cutting types there are two subtypes: shearing and piercing.

a) within the shearing subtype there are two further subtypes, based on the location of the serrated shearing surface:

- anterior and posterior surfaces serrated.
- posterior surface only serrated.

b) the piercing type is found only in those subspecies using fish as a major source of food.

- 4) there are two dentition patterns present in dragons:

- homodontism—all teeth of the same type (shearing, piercing)—white**, blue, silver, brass, and gold.
- heterodontism—several types of teeth present in dragon subspecies—green, red, bronze.

- 5) cutting and shearing teeth never stop growing and are continually replaced if broken.

- 6) replacement or regrowth of a broken tooth occurs due to the presence of a circular gap which prevents the root of the tooth from being damaged.

Tusks and Fangs

These two types of teeth are present only in homodontic subspecies (see above). The enlargement of upper or lower shearing teeth may be an adaptation for attacking certain large or dangerous prey. No tusks (lower shearing teeth) were found among the metallic dragons, although one of the bronze dragons known as Reaver displayed her enlarged fangs (upper shearing teeth) quite proudly, as apparently they are a distinguishing trait of her clan. It is important to note that, according to Apocrypha, only a small number of the many metallic dragon clans were present at this battle. The same could presumably be said of the chromatic dragons.

black dragons (according to Apocrypha black dragons have only the piercing type of teeth), and white dragons.

**Dentition of white dragons is speculated by Lauranalanthalasa. Dentition pattern of black dragons unknown as none were available in the sample.

Wings and Wing Bones

The nature of the aerial battle and the resulting impact damage on the draconic bodies made it difficult to examine the wings. These fragile appendages were almost always broken, but I was able to reconstruct or straighten out where necessary, at least one wing from each of the chromatic dragon types. Two general types of wing were found: the three-digit wing and the four-digit wing. The numbers refer to the sets of tarsals found in a given wing. Within the four-digit type there are two subtypes, defined by the length of the first tarsal as greater and lesser four-boned wings.

Three-digit wings: This wing type is apparently suited to high speeds and maneuverability. Its narrow breadth makes it unsuitable for gliding or long flights, and species with this type must rest frequently. None of the chromatic dragon carcasses had this type of wing, although Apocrypha reports that black dragons do. Of the metallic dragons, only the ram-horned brass dragons had this variety. This wing type is also the only one to have a forward-jutting spike at the point where the digits join the limb. This may be a remnant of a fourth digit from some time in the species' past.

Four-digit wings: This type is best suited for powerful lifting, diving, and braking while in flight, as it has a greater surface area and is broader in its expanse.

Greater: This type is reserved for the largest and most robust of the subspecies. Examples among the metallic dragons include the silver and bronze subspecies. Among the chromatics only the bulky, heavily muscled reds had this kind, although not all subspecies types were present.

Lesser: This wing allows greater lift than the three-digit type, but it also grants more maneuverability than the Greater four-digit type is found on the serpentine gold and green dragons and on the athletically built blue dragons.



Wing Bones

The bones are surprisingly light and strong, given their enormous size. The tarsals examined range from five to seven feet in length each, and from one to two inches in diameter. Upon examining the wing-bone of the single red dragon corpse hauled from the Vingaard River, the mystery of the lightness was solved. Wing bones are hollow—or rather, filled with air pockets—much like a bird's wing. These air spaces, while lightening the overall appendage, do not compromise its strength. Morphologically, the bones are ovoid with a thick cortical layer surrounding the spongy-textured bone, which in turn encircles a thick marrow cavity. Along its length there are numerous protrusions and holes which may provide anchoring surfaces for the saillike membrane as well as blood flow for these enormous pieces of skin. The spikes which protrude from the distal end of the terminal tarsal on the trailing edge of the wings are visually identical to the puncturing claw and thus may serve the same purpose.

Tails

Draconic tails are controlled, although they are not prehensile. They frequently are used as weapons, but some also have fins which appear to be used for maneuvering and gaining lift in flight or, for dexterity, in swimming.

Weapons

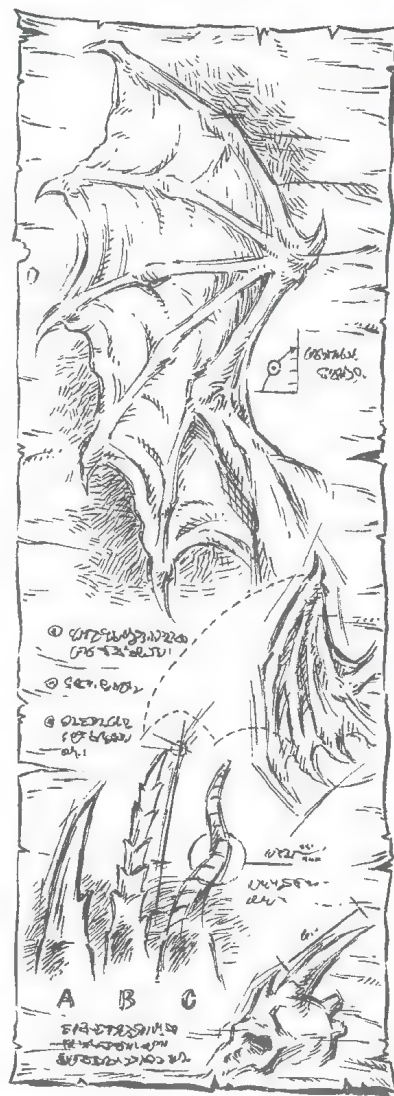
Only three types were observed: spiked tails, bony clubs, and whiplike ends.

Fins

These projections are usually found at the proximal end of the tail, close to the body, although one gold dragon, Corona, had a second set positioned midway along her tail. Tails are unique in that they vary on an individual basis. For example, the two silver dragons,

NOTES

Again, it is worth noting that not all subspecies were present in the survey sample, so these generalizations are not exhaustive. Speculations about the copper dragons would be inconclusive. Further evidence, once gathered, will be added to the final report for publication.



Nova and Star, have different tail types while other external morphology appears the same. This trend is supported by some of the blue dragon corpses examined, which have similar markings yet different tail variations.

Horns

Horns are the most variable part of the draconic adornment anatomy. All members of a given clan have the same horn pattern, though other features may vary. This may indicate that horns are an important identifier among clan structure. Classification of types is impossible due to the variation; some are included here to illustrate the numerous types. As with spinal spikes, crests, and horns, color is variable but stays the same within a given clan (see notes under "Claws").

Adornment Patterns, Crests, Spikes

These spine features include spikes and crests. Orientation of the adornment appears dependent upon the dorsal vertebra. Variability in pattern is high. There can be one medially placed adornment line, two laterally placed lines, three lines (two laterally, one medially) or none at all. The length of the line itself can differ, with some running the entire body length, some only on the neck or back of the dragon, and some only on the neck and tail.

Crests: Appear to be classifiable into two broad types: rigid (non-mobile), and non-rigid (mobile).

Rigid Types: These crests grow directly out of the vertebra, much like a horn, but may be covered in skin or scales. On several of the blue dragons studied, the rigid projections at the base of the neck had been cut off close to the body, apparently to accommodate a dragon saddle. This leads to speculation that the projections are dead or unfeeling tissue, similar to horns or nails.

Non-Rigid Types: These types of crests are attached to the body via muscles and ligaments, rather than to the processes of the vertebra itself. The ligaments and muscles do attach to the vertebra, however. I was at a loss to explain this until I witnessed a heated argument between a gold and a bronze dragon, during which the bronze, in

anger, raised its head and back crests. Thus, the mobile type of crest may be useful for intimidation or attracting a mate. Apocrypha also notes that the crests, if large, can be useful in flight for maneuvering and steering.

Spikes: These are typically short, being no longer than a hand length. They seem to provide protection for the spine. When broken, these spikes apparently do grow back, and in fact may never stop growing. They are a particular point of pride to a certain clan of brass dragons, who have chosen not to trim their neck spikes. Several adult specimens were observed to sport neck spikes more than two feet in length. This social behavior is a form of grooming and indeed a communal activity as it involves rubbing against rocks to grind the spikes down and sharpen them. These spikes differ from crests in that they are generally circular or semicircular in cross-section and do not have skin or scale coverings.

Hair and Fur

The previous theory that dragons are a type of reptile does not bear out according to the latest evidence. At present, there are no reptiles on Krynn capable of growing any sort of body hair. As mentioned in the above descriptions, some dragons are very capable of this, with a great range of variety. This trait was found to exist in both chromatic and metallic dragons, and may be an adaptation to climatic conditions as well as a pattern of adornment for attracting a mate. Color and texture varied, as did length and degree of curl (if any). Hair or fur on dragons is potentially as variable as it is on humans. Location of the fur or hair appears to be limited to the following areas: manes, beards, spinal crests, fetlocks, and both the leading and trailing edges of wings.

Limbs and Paws/Hands

There is great variation present in the sample—some are very handlike and could presumably manipulate objects, while others are more pawlike. This is something that bears further investigation. Several trends and commonalities were noted:

Bone Plates: This is a variable trait among the race as

a whole, but it is presumed to be a commonality within a given subspecies. The three related silver dragons and the corpses of the blue dragon males support this finding. These bones are thick armor plates similar to horn or rigid types of crests (see above). They are typically found on the superior surface of the lower limb and the lateral surfaces of the upper limbs.

Dermal Pads: Regardless of a dragon's subspecies, all have thick dermal pads on the inferior surface of their digits. These pads, while thick, are also supple, allowing for the relative silence of movement by the great beasts. The pads appear to lessen the impact and noise when the limb strikes the ground, as well as being tough enough to not be pierced by sharp rocks. There may also be no pain sensors in the pads, which allows the dragon to walk unhindered on broken ground without discomfort.

Claws

These do not vary within a subspecies, only between species, this may be an expression of the types of prey which a particular subspecies subsists. Dissection of paws of chromatic corpses and examination/inferences from the metallic interviewees resulted in the following diagrams and descriptions of the purpose or function of claw types:

Hooking claws: These grow out of the superior surface of the distal metatarsal. They are securely anchored in bone, supported by flesh and muscle. As they are not in contact with the ground at most times, they are sharply pointed and narrowest on their inner surface. They rarely break, but regrow very slowly (taking years, according

to Apocrypha) if they do. This type is present in copper dragons.

Slashing claws: This type is not anchored in bone, lying on the superior surface of the metatarsal. Most observed samples were broken (presumably due to the recent battle) but thickened and slightly curved on the sides, perhaps for added strength. They regrow quickly (weeks, according to Apocrypha), and are most frequently used to attack wings or vulnerable portions of an enemy or prey. This type is present in blue, brass, silver, green, and white dragons.

Puncturing claws: Growing directly out of the distal surface of the metatarsal, this type of claw is similar to a horn in its composition. Typically, it is round or ovoid in cross-section, long, straight, sharply pointed. Rare examples, notably one blue dragon specimen, have an overall slight curve to the claw itself, but most are not of this style. The main function of this type of claw is to drive deep into an opponent or prey and secure a hold allowing for further struggle. This type is present in red, gold, and bronze dragons.

BEHAVIORAL NOTES

The following is a compilation of observations made during the course of my investigation. While my main purpose was to gather physiological information, the behaviors I observed were worthy of note as starting points for further studies about the social life of these creatures.

ACTS OF DEFERENCE

A younger dragon or one of lower social status will keep its head below eye level when interacting with

NOTES

1) The coloration of the claw material itself varied between subspecies, but was typically ivory-white in color or black; a third major type was ivory-white with colored tips (chromatics only).

GENERAL ANATOMICAL NOTES

1) Females tend to be larger than males, more exotically adorned with fringes and crests.

2) The claws on the front and rear feet may be different in color and type, further suggesting that dragons are not reptiles, but altogether different creatures.

2) Males tend to be more heavily built, with more or longer fur than females.
3) Front and rear limb claws are not always of the same type, which lends further support to the idea that dragons are not reptiles.

one of its superiors.

TERMS OF ADDRESS

Metallic dragons use terms of referral when addressing a social superior regardless of subspecies, terms equating with "lord" or "lady."

MORTUARY PRACTICES

After death a dragon is referred to only by kinship terms (the brother/father/sister of...), never again by its formal name. The good dragons also stopped the Kalamanthian citizens from burning or desecrating the bodies of the slain chromatic dragons. Apparently, even though they are evil, the chromatic dragons are still considered kin and entitled to official respect. They were buried using powerful magic (elementals, wards, etc.), after I was allowed to conduct my examinations. Mortuary practices are something I would like to elaborate on in the future.

PERSONALITY

Female metallic dragons are generally more aggressive, although this may be due to anger over the egg thefts. Males tend to be more boastful and arrogant. This leads to many threatening displays among the dragons. The disputes I learned of were usually over strategy for the campaign and whether the fleeing chromatic dragons should have been pursued after the battle. Several of the metallic subspecies, notably the brass and copper dragons, expressed an unwillingness to work with humans. The brass dragons also were uncooperative when I questioned them or tried to examine them. Much information about them is therefore second hand and thus not totally reliable. The copper dragons were unapproachable before the battle, mainly because of their thirst for vengeance upon learning that the red dragon who had stolen their eggs was present. In the future, I hope to earn the

trust of this more elusive and insular breed to gather more information about them.

SOCIAL ROLES

There appears to be roles for individuals within the metallic dragon society. As mentioned, Apocrypha Cozzlinius, the bronze dragon who helped me in my investigation, occupies a position similar to that of a historian or scholar in our culture. The leader was openly acknowledged by all as Ausirien Blackmane, the elder male gold dragon. The silver dragons tended to act as the emissaries to the humans, while the brass dragons acted as messengers within the metallic dragon forces.

LANGUAGE

There is no written language as far as I am aware. The dragons apparently rely entirely on an oral tradition.

NOTES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1) Now that the origins of the draconians is known (from other sources), it would be interesting to examine their physiology to see if their clan or lineage can be similarly identified. The problem with this research question though is that draconian bodies are destroyed before they can be examined. If a red-robed wizard of sufficient skill could

be engaged to help, perhaps this process could be blocked or postponed long enough to dissect a few samples.

2) The impact of the Graystone upon the ecology of Krynn was significant. Perhaps some work should be authorized to see if the exact roots of certain dragon-kin—such as wyverns, tylors or amphi-dragons—could be determined.



BY LADY RISA KINELLEN,

of the Towers High estate at Tarsis with notes on other Towers of the Fifth Age

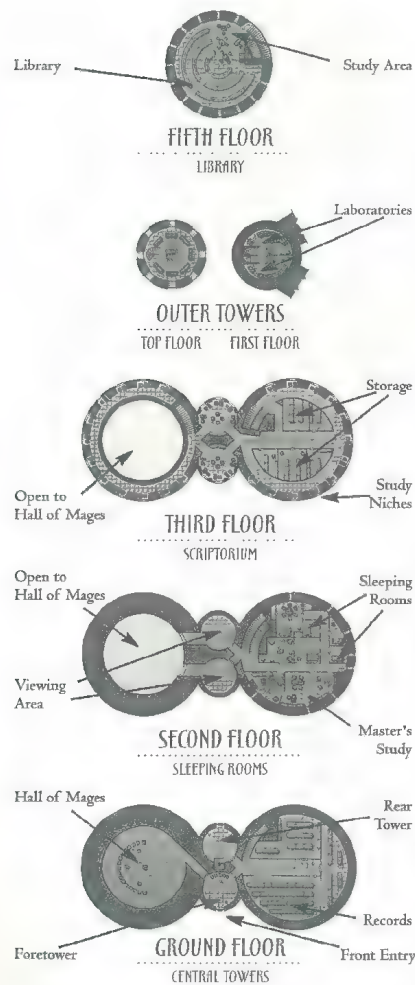
In the early days of that terrible season of striving between gods now known as the War of the Lance, one of the wealthy lords of Tarsis, a man who was old and very ill, sent his page to the Tower of High Sorcery at Wayreth. A scroll filled with lore and spells had been found in the far dusty corners of his library. The lord had no knowledge of things magical, but a mage of his acquaintance assured him this scroll had great value. Because he was a friend the Master of the Tower, Par-Salian of the White Robes, the lord said to his page, "Take this scroll to the Tower of Wayreth, for there is something of value in it for mages. Present it there to the Master with my good will and good wishes. And then," he said wistfully, "come back and tell me how my old friend fares."

"But, my lord," protested the page, "The Forest of Wayreth is a hidden forest, and the Tower itself moves madly around in the secret woodland—"

The lord laughed, for he liked this boy, and so he forgave him his impertinence. "Just go and do as I tell you, lad. What will be, will be."

This, the page said, he would do. He bade his lord farewell then went to make ready for his journey. He did not worry about war catching him. Battles were being fought all over Krynn, but he reckoned they would be noisily fought and he

THE TOWER OF WAYRETH



would be able to avoid them. He put on stout boots for long walking, took with him a good staff and a short sword, and tucked the magical scroll into the breast of his shirt for safe-keeping. He left Tarsis by the North Gate on a fine bright morning, thinking he would head across the Plains of Dust and through the Kharolis Mountains. It would be a long journey, one of several weeks, he was certain, but the weather was fine, the fighting far off, and he had before him more days of freedom than he had known since before his father put him into his lord's service. And so, the page went out from the city in a mood as bright as the day.

He did not get but a quarter-mile up the road before he found himself standing where he could never have imagined he would be on that morning—in the middle of a forest. Not only did he stand with trees all around him, where no tree had ever been, but he felt a tap upon his shoulder, heard a whisper in his ear. He turned, round and about, and saw nothing but trees.

"Good day to you, lad," said a voice. "Welcome to the Forest of Wayreth."

A voice spoke, but no body embodied it, and this wonder took place in a forest where no forest should be. The page reached for his sword, feeling foolish even as he did. What, after all, was there for him to strike?

"Who are you?" he said. He turned again. "Where are you?" The voice chuckled, a warmly amused sound of the kind old men make over the antics of boys. "Why, I am right here with you in the Forest of Wayreth. As for who I am—well, I am your guide, boy. You are expected at the Tower."

In the very instant the voice gave him this news, the page looked back over his shoulder where he should have seen Tarsis the Beautiful gleaming through the trees, he saw instead the dark walls of a compound of seven towers.

"What?" he said, feeling more and more perplexed. "Where—?" Softly, the voice said, "Hush, boy. You have been given a chance to learn something. Stand still and keep quiet. I have lore to impart."

The boy stood still, and he kept quiet. And this is what the Voice said.

There were once five Towers of High Sorcery. Well, you know that, and you know—or you should know—how they were made at the behest of Nuitari, Solinari, and Lunitari, those deities who are the three gods of Magic, and who—three thousand years ago—taught High Sorcery to a small group of mages in the days after magic ran wild and tore up the world in earth-

quake and fire and flood. Of these five magnificent structures dedicated to the nurturing of High Sorcery and the education and testing of mages, only the Tower of Wayreth and the Tower of Palanthas still stand. The most glorious of these is Wayreth, the seat of the Conclave of Wizards, that lofty body of twenty one who govern the three Orders. And though war rages now, though gods strive against each other and use mortals as their weapons, this Tower will stand true.

As were the sites of all the Towers, the site of the Tower of Wayreth was chosen according to strict astrological and magical methods in order to locate it where Krynn's powerful natural magical forces lay. The paths of the moons were studied, the land surveyed, and it was seen that Wayreth in the Qualinesti forest would be suitable. Each of the Towers was warded by a Guardian Forest—one to tease away the memory of an intruder, one to plunge an interloper into sleep, another to fill the trespasser with uncontrolled passion, a fourth—Shoikan Grove surrounding Palanthas—imbued with such terrors as to drive the unwanted visitor mad. As you have seen, the Forest surrounding the Tower of Wayreth has a mischievous, though not less deadly nature. This is because the Tower of Wayreth, unlike its sister towers, exists outside the dimension of this world.

As a ship is anchored to the bottom of the sea, so is the Tower and the Guardian Forest itself magically anchored to Krynn. Travel between Krynn and the Tower is possible only when the two dimensions touch. No one decides where that will be but the Tower itself, for this structure is imbued with a consciousness unlike that of any being on Krynn. So it is that the Tower and the Forest seem to move around, shifting from one place to another almost whimsically. The truth is this: the Forest fills an area only ten miles in diameter, with the Tower standing on firm—and immobile—foundations in the exact center. However, the Guardian Forest is able to touch Krynn anywhere within five hundred miles of the Tower's construction site. Thus, the Forest and the Tower itself can suddenly appear anywhere from the edge of the Icedwall Glacier north to Abanasima, and from Northern Ergoth—which is now being called Qualimori—east to just behind Tarsis.

Confusion, the makers of this most important of the five Towers decided, is the best defense.

The Forest of Wayreth admits only whom it pleases, mages who are ready to take the Test of High Sorcery or persons who have been invited to present themselves at the Tower. All others find themselves wandering on paths whose direction changes from moment to moment, leading first through forests of fruitwood and hardwood, plunging suddenly into misty dales, then turning again so that the wanderer finds himself standing in clear sight of the South Sirrion Sea or even Ice Mountain Bay. The mage whose purpose is not clear or firm and the visitor who has no invitation often give up the quest to find the Tower in rage or resignation.

Some, I will not deny, perish in the forest and are never found again.

Only if the Tower wishes to admit you, will it find you.

"And it has found me," said the page, his voice hushed with wonder as he stared at the seven towers surrounded by the dark, dark wall.

"Yes, it has," said the voice. . . .

The Tower has found you, but where do you find yourself? Why, facing the rising sun and standing not before the gates of a single tower, but before the gates of a compound comprising seven towers. You see three outer towers standing at the points of the three converging walls as at the points of an equilateral triangle. Four towers stand within the walls, one a Fore Tower, one a Rear Tower, and above all the towers, an enormous South Tower and its sister, the North Tower.

These walls, stretching three hundred feet on each leg of the triangle, are not crafted of obsidian, though they are black as that good stone. They are made from the essence of the world itself, from the soul of Krynn as it were, and they are covered in a graffiti of arcane runes, some written large, some so small you must



THE TOWERS OF WAYRETH

The five Towers of High Sorcery, created by the combined efforts of the world's most powerful wizards of red, black, and white robes, have always played a key role in the affairs of Krynn. Although the wizards of the Conclave destroyed two of the towers—those at Daltigoth and Goodlund—hundreds of years ago to prevent them from falling into the hands of the Kingpriest, and the Kingpriest's own Tower at Istar today lies fathoms beneath the Blood Sea, the world's two most powerful towers remain pivotal in the present day.

stand right up against the wall and squint before you see them. Large and small, many of these runes are so ancient even the most learned mage cannot decipher them. The walls, as you see, are slightly curved, giving the appearance of being bowed.

They did love illusion, the builders of this Tower.

Are you wondering which one of all these is the Tower? Well, they are all the Tower of Wayreth, for the word "tower" must not be taken literally in this instance. It stands for a concept—that of a fortress of knowledge and education.

Look now, the gate opens! Step within, for you have been invited, and see what is to be seen.

The page did as he was told to do, but now his heart was pounding hard, for he was entering domains he had never thought to see. He put his hand to the scroll tucked in his shirt and he said, "Sir, my lord mage—for surely you must be a mage, or perhaps you are magic—"

"I know what you carry, boy. Hold it yet, for a time. Now come. . . ."

Stand here in the front courtyard a moment, catch your breath. Now look around at the vast space, feel the gray stone under your feet. Out the corner of your eye you will catch glimpses of other visitors, but don't waste time trying to make those glimpses last longer than the space it takes a hummingbird to flit by. These are mages going about their business, and that is business you'd do well to stay out of, young man. And don't wander! Yes, there is a rear courtyard—if that is what you are trying to see—and there is where the mages who live in the Tower grow herbs and fruit and vegetables. You will not be welcome in those private gardens.

Come now to the Fore Tower, this smaller one here standing between the North and the South towers. Stay close, and *touch nothing*. Remember to keep yourself always within the sound of my voice. The Tower has the same ability to distort your sense of direction within doors as it does out of doors. You would be lost in an instant on your own, and without me to speak for you

to whomever you might meet . . . well, we need not dwell upon that. Simply remember to stay close.

Within the Fore Tower there is little worth lingering over. There is the viewing area on the second floor where, when the word is given, stone panels change to transparent ones and someone may look in on the Hall of Mages in the South Tower. On the third floor is the scriptorium where mages study and work. Interruptions are not welcome there. On the fourth floor above is the kitchen where the mages each prepare his or her own meal, and the storerooms, no more interesting than those you'd find anywhere. In fact, if you were not with me, but invited here on your own, or a mage come to take your Test of High Sorcery, you would likely not even see the inside of this tower. You would be magicked away to one of the guest suites the moment the courtyard pavers felt your feet upon them. As it is, you may come inside and stand here beneath these torches—yes, it is magic that keeps them from smoking—and watch as the guest book records your name. See how the writing appears on the pages as though an invisible hand were at work? Ah! There is your name. In this way Parsalian, the Master of the Tower, knows who has come here and, at all times during a visit, where the guest is. When you leave the Tower, your name will vanish. A tidy system, eh?

Now, step over here and we will begin your tour in earnest.

Welcome to the Hall of Mages where the Conclave of Wizards has met for nearly three thousand years. Here the mages hold meetings on Tower business and deliberate matters the Conclave has deemed of interest. Here, also, they bring visitors whom they wish to impress with the might and main of the Conclave. In the center of the hall you see this imposing chair cut from a block of gray marble. Come, look, you see it is shot through with veins of white and red and black. Dwarf-work? Or the work of elven stone-shapers? No. Mage-craft, and here sits the Head of the Conclave, today as Masters have done since the first Wizards of High Sorcery raised up the Tower. Ranging around the high seat are these twenty hardwood chairs for the rest

of the Conclave. Upon these seats have sat mages whose deeds are known to us in song and tale, mages whose histories are woven in enigma, and those whose stories are known only to Astinus the Lorekeeper himself. Many of them chose to be entombed after death in the crypts beneath the Tower, in slumber perhaps not so deep that they cannot know what deliberations are going forward in this chamber they frequented of old.

Close your eyes and breathe gently—do you smell it? The scent of all the mages who have met here in council since the tower of Wayreth was first raised. Smell the wool of their garb, the fragrance of a thousand spell components all woven into a mysterious tapestry of scent. Oak moss and clary and marjoram and gentian. That is the tang of pine tickling your nose, and the heaviness of essential oils of lavender and chamomile and patchouli. All these scents, and so many more, are the perfumes of magic, and they linger here in the Hall of Mages. No fragrant candle or incense need be burned to sweeten the air here.

Yes, you are right—it does indeed seem that this chamber is far larger than logic would agree it must be. That is illusion, and you knew that, didn't you? You are, after all, in a meeting place of wizards. The light shining around you is made by magic's hand to foster the illusion you just noticed, for it does not shine as high as the ceiling, and it does not illuminate the walls. Just such a feeling as this does a man get who is walking into a strange cavern with only his torch in hand. The cave, he feels—this chamber, you think—must run on forever! It does not. It is finite, but there is no need to waste time trying to reckon the dimensions. Remember, the Tower shifts direction and space within its confines as it pleases. Should it please the Tower to confuse you, it will. I see no need to tempt its amusement, and we have several flights of stairs to climb now, so let's get to it.

He was an athletic youngster, that page, but it did cross his mind that the climbing of those "several flights" of stairs was an easier thing for this disembodied voice to do than for a boy with a flesh and blood body, no matter how strong his legs. It seemed to him that each flight climbed as high as the Kharolis Mountains, that they would never reach their destination.



WAYRETH TOWER

The historical seat of the Conclave, the Tower at Wayreth has remained surprisingly unchanged with the advent of the new age. Although High Sorcery no longer functions on Krynn, the wizards here continue to offer the Test to young mages strong in the new magic. That "new magic" was discovered here at the Tower when Palin Majere, the Master of the Tower, and the traitorous Shadow Sorcerer met in the year 28 following the Second Cataclysm. Pooling their knowledge, they hit upon the key to the new mode of spellcasting, which draws on the primordial magic of Krynn without the intervention of the absent gods of magic or the use of traditional rites.

Wayreth Tower is home to the world's largest catalogue of magical items. Although the world has changed much in the last forty years, Wayreth remains a formidable bastion of magic. Perhaps that is why many wizards of High Sorcery seek refuge here. Some of them learn the new ways, others simply take comfort in the proximity of the arcane trappings of days gone by.

Although not a permanent resident, Palin Majere keeps a workshop here in the rooms once occupied by the venerable Par-Salian: Palin consults with the Master of the Tower, who is rumored to be the embodiment of magic in this new age.

The Tower's other well-known powers remain. At the will of the Master, it may transport itself anywhere within a five hundred mile radius of its construction site within Wayreth Forest. And, as all mages who seek the Tower ultimately discover, the magic of the ever-shifting Wayreth Forest makes it impossible to find the Tower unless it wants to be found. Thus the Gray Robes, wizards of the Dark Knights, have been searching for the Tower at Beryl's behest, but have not yet found it.

"But you will," said the voice, chuckling again. "And—ah, there, you have. Step inside that door right there, the one with the silver door knob. . . ."

The library of the Tower of Wayreth is one of the true wonders of Krynn. It comprises five floors, and the scent of mages lies lightly on the rooms, for now the perfumes of ink and parchments old and new rule. Here are scrolls and books which contain all the marvels of magic known to the Conclave, tomes rich with spell-craft, so great is the collection that mages come here to study from all the world over. Seldom does a wizard come here questing for some spell, some history, some little bit of lore long feared forgotten, and go away unrewarded. Yes, it is hard to breathe in here, for it is as though all the books and scrolls and parchments have stolen the air from the room. Why that is I cannot say though I can offer a guess: A wise woman once said that when a man has died, it is only his body that decays. His spirit lives on yet in memory, the remembrances of his kin and friends, and in the pages of books he has penned. It might be that, after all, these books are living beings, breathing and listening and waiting.

Smile, if you will, but I see you taking those shallow careful breaths. You do not doubt the wise woman utterly, do you? Now let us leave the books in peace.

And so there were more stairs, flights running down now instead of up, and these the page took with a more sprightly step, bounding down like a boy released from long imprisonment indoors.

"Imprisonment," said the voice, startling the page by reading his very thought. "Well, that reminds me. We have not seen the dungeons, have we?"

"N-no, my lord mage," said the page, and he put his hand again to the scroll in his shirt, as though touching a talisman, perhaps to remind this arcane guide that he had, after all, been sent here with a gift to the Master of the Tower. "And—and, if it please you, I have not a very great interest in seeing them."

The voice chuckled. "Well, you need not if you will not, and perhaps that is wise. They are dark and terrible places, those dungeons

of ours. We can be quite friendly to our well-mannered guests, but those who displease us see another side of our hospitality. Our dungeons have no windows, and no light is allowed. And there is—you will believe me, I am sure, since you do not seem to require proof—there is no way into those places or out from them that does not employ magic. Thus we have no need for doors and bolts and locks. It doesn't often happen that we employ chains or restraint of any kind, either. We are, after all, mages, and we can keep a prisoner where we wish him to be with only a word and a gesture.

"But, enough of the dark places. Come! Let me show you brighter things. . . ."

From the library to the records wing—there is hardly a transition at all but that which we make by walking out of the South Tower and into the North Tower. Here on the ground floor of the North Tower we find a series of chambers holding a vast collection of records extending as far back as the Cataclysm itself. There are librarians here, working under the mage who oversees the library in the South Tower. They are about, but you cannot see them. Are they shy? Not at all! They are, shall we say, single-minded, and they have no interest in meeting visitors.

Within the records wing you will not find arcane documents, but homey missals having to do with the lives of the mages who have lived and worked here. The arcana of accounting, one wag called it, and I suppose he did not mis-speak, for here are inventories, personal diaries, the names of those who have taken the Tests of High Sorcery—with dates and outcomes—and comprehensive records of Conclave meetings. Details dry as dust and yet each a thread in the larger tapestry of not only the history of the Tower of Wayreth, but of High Sorcery on Krynn. "Safe as in a mage's hoard," isn't that the old expression? Well, well, it is true that we do not throw anything away, for who knows when a single line of text on a crumbling slip of parchment will prove to be the clue to some ages-old mystery? Instead we store it all in boxes and coffers, and when we run out of space, why, we are mages. We simply shrink the package and thereby gain more space. Look around you. See? The light here is the same as that illuminating the Hall of Mages and with the same effect. We do not light

with fire in the records wing. No, not even with magical fire. You can imagine the hazzard among all these dusty books. You can imagine the loss should fire ever find itself loose in here.

It is a good word, "homey," and it applies to the North Tower as well as it can apply to anything in this magical enclave. Record-keeping is done here, and the day-to-day needs of living are met. Residence chambers make up a large part of the rest of the North Tower, in small suites and grand, all according to the status of the mage. And, no matter his or her status, each mage will have a chamber with a comfortable bed, an alcove for meditation, and room for a desk outfitted with parchments and inks and pens. On the second floor are the bathing rooms, areas scattered throughout the tower with ceramic tile floors and braziers full of burning coals upon which herbs and incenses have been sprinkled to warm and fragrance the air. These are fine places to be on cold days, as mage and guest alike have learned.

We are a secretive group who live in the Tower of Wayreth, but we are as proud of our hospitality as the keeper of any inn. By his hospitality a man is known, so say the dwarves. We do not disagree. In this Tower the original architects provided generous guest rooms, each like the one you see here, across from the baths. If you were a guest of the Master of the Tower for a period of time, you would be given accommodations here. You would sleep in a comfortable bed like this one and have the use of a writing table, an arm chair, even a chest for storing your clothing and accouterments.

The page wished he could stay, for he felt he had walked miles, and he could not imagine where he would find strength to return through the Forest of Wayreth once he was allowed to deliver the scroll and his lord's greeting to Par-Salian. But no invitation to rest seemed forthcoming, and so he slipped his hand inside his shirt yet again, and this time he withdrew the scroll.

"My lord mage," he said in his most respectful tones, "you have been kind and very generous to show me all that you have. This Tower of Wayreth is magnificent and worthy of its reputation for beauty. But now, if you please, I have a commission to perform." He held up the scroll, feeling foolish, for he did not know where the unseen speaker was, and so he did not know whether he was presenting the scroll to the back of the man's head or to his face. "Is it possible, my lord, to show me to the Master of the Tower? For it is into his hands alone I am ordered to place this scroll."

The unseen guide stayed silent for a long moment. Then, "Have patience, young page. When the time is, the time is. And the time isn't, just yet."

"Now you have seen all that most visitors to the Tower are given to see, but there is another place to show you, and that privilege you are granted by virtue of the fact that the Master of the Tower wishes it."

Come with me now, keeping close always, for we will be walking through dark corridors where the only light is from the little globe in my hand. The way is twisting, an effect of the Tower's will and that of Par-Salian himself, the Master of the Tower of Wayreth. He is a genial host, our Master, but he does like to choose his guests. Uninvited visitors to his chambers are discouraged, and these dark and winding hallways are only one of the ways he does that. Listen! Do you hear the weary sound of water sliding down cold stone walls? Do you hear the moan of breezes cold as winter rain, the clanking of armor, the hiss of a steel blade sliding from its jeweled sheath? These are not real, and yet they would become real if the Master willed. They are, as I said, discouragements. But—step back, I must work a magic—watch your eyes!

There. See the corridors as they truly are. These walls are hung with tapestries of elven make, statuary of gemmed gold from the forges of the master-smiths in Thorbardin. The settles are brocaded, with stuffed plump footstools for the comfort of the invited guest who awaits the Master's pleasure. There is but one door in the wall of this corridor, that great oaken one in the exact center of the east wall. That is the way into the chamber of the Master, the home of Par-Salian himself.

We will not go far into these rooms, for you have

already been granted boon enough to be able to stand upon the threshold and peer inside. See the silken wall hangings? Those, it is said, were woven upon the loom of an elven princess so many years ago it is hard to know the truth of the count. It is said among some that she spent all her life in the highest chamber of her father's high house, for she refused to marry the man he chose for her, and he refused to let her out into the sunlight until she did as he wished. The blue is the blue of the sky over Silvanesti, the green the exact color of the grass on the lawn outside the Tower of the Stars. The gold, ah, the gold. None such is seen in nature unless upon the aspens in the Sylvan land when autumn comes with cold fingers to touch.

The furniture—desk and chairs and the bed beyond the hangings in that alcove there—is the work of the keenest wood-carver of Istar, made a long time ago in the days before the Cataclysm. It is rumored that the Kingpriest of Istar himself once sat upon the chair placed there by the desk. Stories, stories, this Tower is full of them. Some are true, some are not. Others should be.

Look past the desk to the door in the wall. There is the way into Par-Salian's study. Beyond that is his laboratory where he spends many nights waking and working. His cares are many in these dark days of warring gods. His sleep is light, when sleep he does at all.

Now come, come away. You have seen all that you should and more than most are permitted. Come away, back down the corridor. The illusion of discouragement is creeping up again, like mist from the ground, and you will want to hurry.

The page did want to hurry. Weary though he was, he felt it in the very bones of him that he wanted to hurry. All that he had been given to see was a great wonder to him, and all of it seemed to whirl in his mind the way the hearth-room of an inn whirls in the eyes of a man who has had too much to drink. The scroll still in hand, he followed the voice away from the chambers of the great Par-Salian, and he trotted along quickly, for the voice itself seemed to want that. He heard it now as though it were well ahead of him, the voice of a man who takes great long-legged strides. Down through the North Tower they went, the page's boots clattering on the stone stairs. He

caught now and then, glimpses of others going by, mages in red robes and white robes and—be shuddered—black robes, all about their business, none concerned with him. When at last he stood outside the Tower of Wayreth again, outside the gate itself, he still had the scroll in his hand.

"My lord mage," he said, breathless. "I have not yet presented this scroll to the Master of the Tower. And—" he cleared his throat awkwardly, "—and I must give it to Par-Salian himself, for so I have been commanded."

Dusk lay on the land, long purple shadows seeped out from beneath the trees, all the light there had fled high up in the sky now. Ah, but not all the light, for suddenly the air before the page sparkled and shimmered. Laughter sounded in the quiet of the forest. As the page watched, his mouth agape, the shimmering air became suddenly solid, shaping itself into a tall man whose face was lined with care and whose eyes shone with deep, strong wisdom. His long white hair gleamed like snow on the high slopes of the Kharolis Mountains. The mage held out his hand.

"I am he to whom you have been sent, Master Page. I am Par-Salian, and I am, indeed, an old friend of your good lord." Sadness darkened his eyes. "He is not well, your lord. His life is reckoned in hours now, and there are not many left. I have shown you all of the Tower of Wayreth because I wish you to show it to him, as you have known it. Tell him all you saw, tell him all you smelled and heard and felt and what you tasted of magic here. And tell him, Master Page, that his old friend fares well, and that I pray the gods will grant him contentment and happiness for what time remains to him."

It was on the page's lips to say that he would, to swear an oath as bright as that any knight might swear, for he was greatly moved by the speech of the Master of the Tower. But he had no chance to speak even a word. In an instant the scroll was gone from his hand, appearing at once in the aged hand of Par-Salian. Even as he realized that, the page found himself gone from the Forest of Wayreth. Or, perhaps it was that the forest was gone from him. He looked around and saw that he now stood outside the North Gate of Tarsis the Beautiful. The hour was not eventide, but only moments from the time he first left the city.

"Dear gods," he whispered, his voice hushed by awe.

And then he said no more, to gods or to himself. He hastened back to his master and he did what Par-Salian had commanded, thereby bringing great joy to the good old man in the last hours of his life.



TOWER AT PALANTHAS

Immediately following the Chaos War, Dalamar the Dark returned to the Tower of High Sorcery. He sent away all the students who had once resided in the Tower and refused to admit any visitors with the exception of his lover, Jenna. The students who departed carried tales that Dalamar was terribly wounded in his battle with Chaos, perhaps that he was even dying. None know precisely what happened, but one night Palanthas was rocked by an explosion. The Tower of High Sorcery was gone. Some say that a mysterious robed figure was seen visiting the Tower just prior to the explosion. Others believe that Dalamar, knowing he was dying, decided to end his life and destroy the Tower at the same time. Regardless of the cause, the effect can clearly be seen. There is nothing left now of the Tower but a black pool on the barren land. Although the Tower's protective Shoikan Grove was also destroyed in the conflagration, it soon regrew with preternatural speed. The Grove today rings the pool of obsidian, guarding against trespass. Some wonder if this means that the Master of the Tower, whoever it might be, will one day return.



BY STEFAN TYLER,
Acting Supervisor, Visitor Reception Office

Greetings, gentle visitor. We hope that your visit to the Library of Palanthis will be both enjoyable and illuminating. This guide has been compiled for visitors so that they may find what they seek within these walls. We ask that you abide by a few simple rules.

There is no loud talking within the walls of the library. Should you wish to talk about something, please book a discussion room or speak in very quiet tones.

It is very important that visitors do not touch anything that is not in the Public Collections area. If you require assistance, please ask, and an initiate will be happy to help you.

Due to the great age and value of some of the library holdings, viewings of certain items must be supervised. We ask that requests to view any archived items be presented to the Circulation Desk no less than three days before they are needed.

Public memberships are limited to a loan maximum of ten items from the Public Collections at any time. Priest or Scholar memberships are limited to twenty items from the Public Collections and five items from the private collections. Archived items are not permitted to leave the library under any circumstances.

The library also asks that visitors register before entering or leaving.

Praise be to Gilëan, knowledge is a treasure to all, and the property of none.

Stefan Tyler,
Acting Supervisor, Visitor Reception Office, Library of Palanthis

Library Structure:

The library is organized into three main branches, Collections, Research, and Administrative. Visitors are typically concerned with the Collections Branch, as it is responsible for maintaining and reshelving books in the various collections. Within each branch there are many departments and within each department several subdepartments. The reason for such an extensive internal structure is best summed up by the mission statement of the library itself.

The Library's Mission:

The library of Palanthas, under the leadership of Lorekeeper Astinus, is dedicated to three goals:

- the gathering of new knowledge
- the preservation of ancient and current knowledge
- the distribution of knowledge to the public

These goals necessitate the creation of numerous branches and departments dedicated to specific types and categories of knowledge. The library and the priesthood of Gilean encourage diversity in scholarship. We recognize the fact that people come from many backgrounds and have a multitude of interests.

Library Hierarchy:

Within the various departments, there are directors, supervisors, scholars, clerks, and initiates, all united under the leadership of Lorekeeper Astinus. Our leader is advised by the council of directors, made up of the three heads of the affiliated branches. This body is in turn advised by specialists drawn from both inside and outside the library. All personnel in the library belong to the Order of the Aesthetics, also known as the Order of the Book—the faithful followers of Gilean. These include:

Initiates—These are the most novice and numerous members of our Order. They are responsible for assisting the clerks and scribes and performing basic duties within the library.

Clerks and Scribes—These personnel have typically been members of the Order for several years. It is to these positions that initiates aspire, as responsibilities of some include leaving the library to conduct original

field research. Some clerks and scribes occupy positions that are essential to the proper functioning of the library and do not conduct field research.

Supervisors—These individuals have belonged to the Order of the Book for many years. They are responsible for assigning tasks to the clerks, overseeing scribe research, and offering a guiding hand when needed. In addition to this, they are required to conduct original research, either within the library or in the field.

Chairs—These individuals are the heads of various departments. They assign funding to the scribes, and select initiates for departments. They are mainly restricted to in-library research, as their duties require substantial day-to-day diligence.

Assistant Directors—These individuals are responsible for aiding the Branch Director in allocating both monetary and personnel resources. Research responsibilities are minimal, as they also perform daily worship services.

Directors—Second only to Astinus himself, these three people determine the ultimate goals and direction of the library as time progresses. They are responsible for advising Astinus, resolving internal disputes, and giving final approval to administrative proposals.

Astinus—His role is to observe and record time as it passes, and to offer his findings upon the altar of Gilean.

A Note on Departments:

Each department or subdepartment maintains a desk in the library for research purposes and for public contact. The offices of these departments are located on the first floor below the Public Collections Wing. Specimen and artifact storage chambers, as well as laboratory space, is located on the two floors beneath the Private Collections Wing. Patrons are not permitted to enter these areas without supervision.

Collections Branch:

This branch has five main departments, listed below, each with its own subdepartments. Collections is assigned the task of supervising materials that the library acquires or already has in its possession.

Restorations Department—This department is comprised of three subdepartments.

Text Recopying and Duplication—This subdepartment replaces worn or damaged volumes and makes copies of popular volumes for other libraries, private collections, and multiple copies of a book.

Specimen Repair—Occupies a role similar to text recopying, but deals instead with artifactual items instead of books, maps, or other paperbound items.

Translations—This subdepartment translates all incoming items into Solamnic. The gifted scholars of this subdepartment also conduct research into ancient “dead” languages to unlock their secrets and translate existing holdings. Personnel in this department may also accept work outside the library, translating for people with private collections.

Storage and Retrieval Department—This department has two main subdepartments.

Secure Storage—The library has many dangerous and valuable items that certain individuals would steal if opportunity presented itself. These items are stored beneath the library in a locked vault.

Rare Items—This collection is also under lock and key, but it is made up of items that are too fragile for handling or have decayed to the point where they have

had to be placed under magical protection.

Art Department—This department has two main subdepartments.

Visual Arts—These individuals are skilled in drawing and painting and are frequently assigned to aid field scribes in their studies. They produce interior and cover illustrations for new works, as well as consulting on art restoration projects.

Models and Replicas—This subdepartment produces replicas of valuable artifacts, buildings, technology, and animals as required by researchers and display builders.

Preparations Department—Deals mainly with artifacts and specimens retrieved by field scribes.

Specimen Cleaning—Occupying a basement beneath the stables, this subdepartment skins and boils the carcasses of animals retrieved by the field scribes in preparation for cataloguing and mounting.

Specimen Mounting and Reconstruction—These personnel take the recovered skeletons of animals and reassemble them for storage or display. The second function of these personnel is to rebuild damaged artifacts found at archaeological sites.



Academic Branch:

This branch of the library is dedicated to the acquiring of knowledge for the library. It is the domain of the people who actually conduct research and publish their findings. They are the most diverse of the library's personnel in age, race and interests.

Acquisitions Department- This department is responsible for bringing new materials into the library from the field. It is made up of five subdepartments.

Floral Specimens- This subdepartment gathers specimens and information about Kryn's plant life. It is divided into three main groups:

- Trees
- Flowers and Plants
- Mosses and Lichens

Faunal Specimens- This subdepartment gathers information about and specimens of the animal life of Kryn. Due to the variety of animal life, this is the single largest subdepartment of the library. Personnel study:

- Insects
- Birds and Flying Animals
- Lizards, Snakes, and Swamp Creatures
- Land Animals
- Fish and Sea Creatures
- Magical Animals

Textual Specimens- Personnel in this department retrieve various written records from sites across Ansalon. This subdepartment works closely with the ethnographic and archaeological subdepartments. Specifically, the subdepartments work to acquire specialized types of records:

- Scrolls and Books
- Maps
- Tablets
- Music

Artifactual Specimens- Recognizing that precious as well as mundane artifacts are important to learning about a particular society, the personnel of this subdepartment collect representative materials of present or historic cultures. They work alongside archaeologists and ethnographers. There are five main types of objects they work to obtain:

- Weapons and Armor
- Clothing
- Ceremonial or Sacred Objects
- Musical Instruments
- Artwork and Pottery

Geological Specimens- This is a relatively new subdepartment and is occupied mainly by dwarves and humans of mining stock before joining the library staff. There are four specialized subdepartments reflecting the growing demands of this field:

- Metals
- Gems
- Rocks
- Corals

Research Department- Scholars in this department conduct research in the field and in the library but do not collect specimens. This department has two main subdepartments, each with several subdepartments.

Field Histories- This subdepartment conducts research out in various societies.

• Culture Histories- People in this subdepartment live for a time in a certain society and write an exhaustive account of that culture.

• Life Histories- These are conducted through interviews with an individuals, their families, and close relations. They provide a view of the common person in a given group over a life span.

• Biographies- This subdepartment is dedicated to creating authoritative accounts of the famous persons of Ansalon's past and present through interviews and secondary sources.

• Geological Surveys- These missions are intended to determine the composition of the various geological formations of Ansalon. Research requires that the scribe monitor a specific site over a long period of time.

• Mapmaking- Expeditions from this subdepartment are dedicated to increasing the accuracy of maps possessed by the library. This area has assumed great importance in the days since the Cataclysm.

• Ancient Histories- This subdepartment works to recover information lost to the River of Time. The

lifeways of cultures as far back as the Age of Dreams are reconstructed by plotting ruins and reconstructing them with models, drawings, and recovered artifacts. This department, for example, is responsible for much of what is known about the ancient High Ogre civilization.

• Census- The scholars of this subdepartment are responsible for gathering accurate population numbers and actuarial data for all of Ansalon.

• Astronomy- Personnel in this department are dedicated to charting the course of constellations, stars, planets, and other celestial bodies.

Topical Histories- This subdepartment is dedicated to gathering and synthesizing information based on the library's existing holdings. It is a large and diverse subdepartment. Scholars engage in research and writing about a specific topic such as law, a particular event or type of event in history, or a specific location. These are only a few examples of this wide-ranging department.

Administrative Branch

This branch of the Great Library is dedicated to day-to-day operations. It is comprised of five main departments:

Treasury Department- This department is responsible for the monetary issues of the library. Within it are four subdepartments:

Accounting- This subdepartment tracks all library expenditures and income.

Grants and Awards- This subdepartment is responsible for reviewing requests for funding.

Collections and Donations- This subdepartment is charged with traveling the countryside soliciting donations for the library. It also collects donations from patrons during their visits.

Maintenance and Supply Department- These personnel are the unsung heroes of the library. They are responsible for the physical maintenance of the library. There are four main subdepartments:

Shipping- This subdepartment receives new materials and supplies, logs them, then ships them out to cus-

tomers and distant patrons.

Supplies and Equipment- The staff of this subdepartment is responsible for outfitting expeditions with food, appropriate clothing, tools, and weapons. Inside the library they are responsible for refilling inkpots, producing specialty inks, obtaining special materials for manuscripts or other projects, and specialty paper-making.

Livery- The stables are responsible for providing steeds, or contacts with liveries, to scholars.

Construction and Repairs- Most personnel in this subdepartment were carpenters, masons, or tilecutters before joining the library, and these are the skills they purvey in daily duties.

Communications Department- This department is the hub of internal and external communications. It is made up of two subdepartments:

Mail Office- All internal and external mail passes through this office and is recorded and delivered or passed to external couriers.

External Relations- This subdepartment handles contact with the outside world and is responsible for acting as a liaison to external guilds and societies.

Records Department- The personnel in the records department keep track of information about the library itself. Its roles include visitor reception and requests. A second function of this department is to keep track of expeditions, their locations, manifests, missions, and itineraries. Records date back roughly 2,500 years. There is one main subdepartment: the Cataloguing Department. Its personnel are responsible for keeping track of the library's vast and ever-growing holdings.

Specimen Labeling- Each new artifact or object entering the library is assigned a catalogue number. In the case of animals or broken objects, each bone or fragment is numbered.

Card Cataloguing- Personnel in this subdepartment create records about new textual holdings, replace lost or damaged cards, and aid patrons in searches.

Publications Department- Members of this department are in charge of any publishing the library

does. It is divided into several subdepartments:

Binding- This subdepartment does double-duty, binding new manuscripts and replacing damaged bindings on older tomes. Patrons also can employ the services of this subdepartment to repair or restore their own collections. Independent scholars can have their works bound by this subdepartment for a fee.

Submissions- The Order of Gilean recognizes the amateur scholar and the value of such work. If a work is submitted to be placed in the library's collections, it must pass through this office to be examined for content and accuracy. Approval for a book may take years, depending on its length and topic.

Other Bodies within the Library:

The library has formed several groups dedicated to the library's mission to aid scholars in specific fields or to clarify existing knowledge. Personnel are drawn from inside the library and relevant fields in society.

Cartographic Council- Made up of specialists from the library, mariners, prospectors and merchants. This council is dedicated to increasing map accuracy and finding the safest and most rapid travel routes.

Council on Religion- This group is made up of representatives of the various Gods, regardless of their disparate beliefs, who share a common desire for interfaith dialogue and cooperation. The goals are to increase knowledge of the old Gods, monitor cults and seeker activities, and work toward peaceful co-existence of the many faiths of Kryn. A number of representatives of the Gods of Darkness have made appearances at this council.

Council on Information Studies- This is a new body, its personnel drawn from within the library as well as from the Wizards Conclave. Its goals are to design and

create methods, magics, and technologies to aid in information gathering and specimen preservation. This council has quickly proven its worth, creating specialty inks that repair or copy manuscripts and the "glue of hiding." The glue proved especially useful in restoring valuable early Elven Ceramics. Other creations include the "box of protection," to allow safe travel of fragile objects; the "staff of teleportation," to allow rapid transport of dangerous or fragile specimens; and the paralysis spell that has aided the art department in their spectacular animal illustrations.

Bureau of Nomenclature- This group is responsible for maintaining a system of scientific names for specimens in the library's collections as represented in the natural world. Interested parties have adopted this standardized taxonomic system across Ansalon. The nature of its task places it in close association with the Records department.

External Contacts:

The Great Library of Palanthas makes frequent use of experts from outside of its confines. The following is a list of only some of the groups with which the library converses regularly:

- The Wizards Conclave
- Other Priesthoods
- Other Libraries
- The Knights of Solamnia
- Various National Embassies and Emissaries
- The Shipping Guild of Greater Palanthas
- Trading and Mercantile Guilds
- Miners and Prospectors Guilds
- Metallurgists and Jewelers Guilds

We at the Library hope that this introduction to its many departments will provide patrons with opportunity and materials to fulfill any need. Astinus himself has provided our credo:

"Knowledge is a right of all, not a privilege of few."



HAAROLD OF JONSTONE &
STEVE THE MILLER'S SON

Weather is the breath of the world. By far the most important thing about Ansalonian weather is that the continent is located in the southern hemisphere. This means prevailing winds are from the northwest headed southeast. Currents flow north in the west and southward on the east coast, and warmer climes are in the north.

Normally, a southern land experiences a reverse of the seasons, so that summer occurs during the early months and winter during the middle of the year. However, on Krynn winter arrives at the end of the year and continues into the first three months.

The climate regions of Ansalon are: Tropical, Savanna, Desert, Temperate, Transitional Mixed, Tundra, and Arctic.



OMENS OF FAIR & FOUL WEATHER

It is said that elven woodshapers can predict the weather from one day to the next unerringly. The woodshapers even claim they can predict harvests and how harsh or fair a particular season will be. But the common man of Krynn has no special gift to help predict weather conditions. They rely instead upon folk wisdom and sayings that have been handed down through the generations. These range from, "If bats flutter in the air, the morrow will be fair," to "Ants flee, cattle gather beneath a tree, it will not fail there will be hail," and (hurricane warning), "Breakfast smells better than before, rain at the door."

However, the educated peoples rely upon a period table of weather devised centuries ago, which is still relatively reliable.



KRYNN WEATHER TABLES

MONTH	TEMPERATURE HIGHS & LOWS	CHANCE OF CLOUDS	CHANCE OF PRECIPITATION	AMOUNT OF PRECIPITATION
Aelmont (January)				
Tropical	65/48	Chance	20%/04%	5 tenths
Savanna	61/41	Chance	15%/01%	4 tenths
Desert	71/39	Chance	05%/03%	2 tenths
Temperate	39/30	Scattered	35%/02%	6 inches
Mixed	31/24	Scattered	35%/01%	4 inches
Tundra	27/19	Partly	20%/02%	7 inches
Arctic	0/-18	Storm clouds	80%/05%	11 inches
Rannmont (February)				
Tropical	60/41	Chance	10%/03%	2 tenths
Savanna	57/36	Chance	10%/-	2 tenths
Desert	70/35	Chance	05%/02%	1 tenth
Temperate	32/23	Partly	40%/01%	5 inches
Mixed	26/20	Scattered	35%/-	4 inches
Tundra	20/12	Chance	15%/01%	4 tenths
Arctic	-5/-23	Overcast	75%/04%	7 inches
Mishamont (March) (Beginning of Spring)				
Tropical	66/46	Partly	20%/04%	6 tenths
Savanna	63/41	Chance	15%/-	4 tenths
Desert	75/46	Chance	10%/03%	2 tenths
Temperate	41/33	Partly	45%/02%	5 inches
Mixed	39/32	Overcast	40%/01%	5 inches
Tundra	26/18	Chance	20%/02%	5 tenths
Arctic	0/-15	Overcast	80%/05%	11 inches
Chislmont (April)				
Tropical	74/56	Partly	40%/05%	7 tenths
Savanna	66/45	Chance	15%/01%	5 tenths
Desert	82/57	Chance	10%/04%	4 tenths
Temperate	52/41	Scattered	50%/03%	5 inches
Mixed	47/40	Overcast	50%/02%	4 inches
Tundra	39/25	Chance	20%/03%	6 tenths
Arctic	12/-4	Overcast	80%/06%	11 inches

MONTH	TEMPERATURE HIGHS & LOWS	CHANCE OF CLOUDS	CHANCE OF PRECIPITATION	AMOUNT OF PRECIPITATION
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Bran (May)

Tropical	82/68	Scattered	50%/06%	2 inches
Savanna	75/53	Partly	20%/02%	5 tenths
Desert	90/68	Chance	10%/05%	2 tenths
Temperate	62/51	Partly	45%/04%	4 inches
Mixed	55/46	Scattered	40%/03%	2 inches
Tundra	47/32	Chance	15%/04%	5 tenths
Arctic	19/5	Scattered	80%/07%	7 inches

Corij (June)*(Beginning of Summer)*

Tropical	86/73	Scattered	65%/07%	4 inches
Savanna	77/54	Partly	30%/03%	4 tenths
Desert	93/70	Chance	10%/06%	2 tenths
Temperate	67/53	Scattered	50%/05%	2 inches
Mixed	58/50	Partly	45%/04%	2 inches
Tundra	50/30	Chance	20%/05%	4 tenths
Arctic	26/7	Scattered	75%/08%	6 inches

Argon (July)

Tropical	90/75	Storm clouds	80%/08%	3 inches
Savanna	80/54	Partly	40%/04%	5 tenths
Desert	95/70	Chance	10%/07%	2 tenths
Temperate	70/56	Overcast	50%/06%	7 tenths
Mixed	62/52	Scattered	50%/05%	2 inches
Tundra	54/30	Chance	20%/06%	4 tenths
Arctic	32/9	Partly	75%/09%	7 inches

Sirrimont (August)

Tropical	95/76	Storm clouds	70%/09%	4 inches
Savanna	85/66	Scattered	25%/05%	4 tenths
Desert	104/88	Clear	- /08%	0 tenths
Temperate	79/63	Scattered	35%/07%	6 tenths
Mixed	75/59	Partly	40%/06%	4 tenths
Tundra	66/42	Chance	10%/07%	3 tenths
Arctic	34/22	Chance	60%/10%	6 inches

MONTH	TEMPERATURE HIGHS & LOWS	CHANCE OF CLOUDS	CHANCE OF PRECIPITATION	AMOUNT OF PRECIPITATION
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Reorxmont (September)*(Beginning of Autumn)*

Tropical	87/73	Storm clouds	60%/08%	4 inches
Savanna	80/62	Partly	15%/04%	3 tenths
Desert	99/80	Clear	- /07%	0 tenths
Temperate	75/60	Partly	20%/06%	5 tenths
Mixed	70/55	Chance	30%/05%	4 tenths
Tundra	60/49	Chance	05%/06%	2 tenths
Arctic	30/10	Chance	60%/09%	7 inches

Hiddumont (October)

Tropical	80/69	Overcast	50%/07%	3 inches
Savanna	72/54	Chance	10%/03%	3 tenths
Desert	83/66	Clear	- /06%	0 tenths
Temperate	65/49	Partly	20%/05%	4 tenths
Mixed	60/41	Chance	25%/04%	4 tenths
Tundra	53/39	Chance	10%/05%	2 tenths
Arctic	24/3	Partly	70%/08%	6 inches

H'rrarmont (November)

Tropical	76/64	Scattered	40%/06%	3 inches
Savanna	66/50	Chance	10%/02%	3 tenths
Desert	80/63	Chance	05%/05%	2 tenths
Temperate	56/41	Partly	25%/04%	6 tenths
Mixed	52/36	Chance	25%/03%	5 tenths
Tundra	47/31	Chance	15%/04%	3 tenths
Arctic	19/- 5	Scattered	75%/07%	7 inches

Phoenix*(Beginning of Winter)*

Tropical	70/59	Partly	35%/05%	3 inches
Savanna	62/45	Chance	15%/01%	4 tenths
Desert	75/44	Chance	10%/04%	3 tenths
Temperate	48/33	Scattered	30%/03%	7 tenths
Mixed	44/30	Partly	30%/02%	2 inches
Tundra	39/22	Partly	20%/03%	4 tenths
Arctic	10/-12	Overcast	80%/06%	11 inches

(December)



HAAROLD OF JONSTONE &
STEVE THE MILLER'S SON

COINS OF THE REALMS

Coins are not the preferred method of trading among all people of Ansalon, but they certainly are what the civilized folk use.

When a nation issues its own currency, it is in effect telling the consumer that the coin is recognized by the government as having a certain value from which goods and services may be purchased. The government backs the value of its coins by a silver, gold, or in the case of modern-day Ansalon, a steel standard. This has not always been the case, however.





INTERNATIONAL STANDARD STEEL VALUE

Dragon Empire	.90
Empire of Ergoth	1.00
Kaolyn	1.10
Lemish	.80
Minotaur Isles	1.25
Saifhum	1.50
Sancrist/Eastwatch	1.00
Sanction	.90
Seeker Lands	.75
Silvanesti	1.00
Solamnia	1.00
Thorbardin	1.25
Zhakar	.90

The dwarves created the first coins, minting "rounds" of refined metals for easy transport. Each tribe's forge stamped their rounds with different seals marking the year and site of their forging. These rounds would later be melted down to make tools, machines, or armaments at a later date.

Humans originally bartered furs, wood, polished stones, bones, or shells and clay tokens, but they found the metal rounds of dwarves more practical and durable. Thus, during the glory of Istar, that nation set the standard by creating coins minted with the likenesses of the Kingpriests and the gods stamped on their surface. Ironically, the dwarves themselves eventually adopted the notion of clay markers as a representation for metal coins. In Xak Tsaroth, a now-lost city that once housed a large dwarven population, the clay culli became the accepted currency, eliminating the need to carry heavy metals. This practice soon spread beyond Xak Tsaroth, as it permitted governments to hoard precious metals while citizens used tokens that represented the combined wealth of the entire nation or city state.

It's difficult to say whether this idea was particularly sound, or whether it would have become popular, because a few years later the hubris of the Kingpriest of Istar brought down the Catadysm upon the world. Grand and glorious civilizations were destroyed, and with their demise came the collapse of the world's economy. Mighty nations that had been built with the power of precious metals—copper, brass, silver, and the king of coins, gold—were wiped from the face of the world, and with them the value of their coins.

The ancient treasures of buried kingdoms and the lost hoards of dwarves and dragons remained, but their value was questionable. While a wyrm's hoard could still be plundered, of what use were 10,000 clay cullis now that Xak Tsaroth was no more? In Kynn's modern eras—ages of war and strife—the real value lay only in hard, forged metals.

In the twilight Shadow Years the surest of these metals became trade's royalty—bronze, iron, and good dwarven steel. Coins of steel were but a convenient means to transport this life-sustaining metal. The coins could always be melted and reformed into the

tools necessary to maintain a meager grip on life, and perhaps offer hope for a brighter future. The true king of coins is, was, always will be steel!

The value of the new coinage and trade goods varied from nation to nation on Ansalon. In the Seeker Lands, the standard steel coin was called "an Emas." Gold had no recognized value in this land. What good is gold to people trying to scratch a meagre living from the earth, to create tools to rebuild their homes, to create armor and weapons to defend their lands from marauders?

In the lands conquered by the Dragon Empire, coins were not commonly used, but the sturdy metals began to be traded in disks weighing the equivalent of one of the old gold coins. Steel was the standard, but gold had value for some, for it was lusted after by petty men and ogres for adornment. So it was with each nation; the value of coins shifted due to availability or lack thereof and the demand for each metal.

As for the decade of the War of the Lance, the most civilized of the remaining governments on Ansalon minted their own coins. These were: The Seeker Lands (Haven, Longsaddle, Newports, and other cities in Abanasinia); Dragon Empire (Kern [Black and Red Army], Khur [Green Army], Nordmaar [Black and Red Army], Neraka and Sanction [Red and Blue Army]); Dwarven Lands (Kaolyn, Thorbardin & Zhakar); the Empire of Ergoth (the remnant of this once-great nation on Northern Ergoth); Minotaur Isles (Mithas and Kothas); Knight Lands (Sancrist, Solamnia, and Eastwatch); Lemish (an ally of the Dragon Empire on the New Sea); and the once glorious elven nation of Silvanesti.

The remaining nations rely mostly on barter or trade, borrowing and using coins from other nations. These nations are: the Qué-Shu, Qué-Kiri, and Qué-Teh tribes of Abanasinia; the Qué-Nal and Wemituwok tribes on the Isle of Schallsea; the ogre tribes of Blöde; the nomadic human tribes of Estwilde, with the two or three city states (like Jelek and Kalaman) using the currency system of the Dragon Lands; the goblin nation of Sikk'et Hul, and the Ackalite tribes on Northern Ergoth; the kender

nations of Goodlund, Hylo, and the mixed tribes of the Laughing Plains; the city states in eastern Ansalon, including Port Balifor and Flotsam; the centaur and human tribes of the southern shores of the New Sea and the Plains of Dust; Qualinesti; the elven and ogre nations of Southern Ergoth; and Tarsis/Kharolis.

Also, while Khur was officially ruled by the Green Dragonarmy, the nomadic tribes that are native to that nation generally preferred barter and trade over Dragon Empire coinage.

EXCHANGE RATES

Each nation on Ansalon has always had its own unique economy, sometimes based on a particular product or industry that it is well known for. The military might and political influence the nation wields both within and outside its borders influences the value of its currency.

The chart shows typical trade rates in terms of how each nation's steel piece stacks up against the international standard of steel. The chart shows the buying power of each nation's steel coin. For example, a Lemish steel piece coin is worth 80% of a standard steel piece. Items purchased with Lemish coins will cost 20% more.

On the other hand, going to the respective nation and using one's own currency will alter the prices of equipment, armor, weapons, and services accordingly. Going to Lemish and using Solamnic steel to purchase a 100 stl gem will cost 80 stl.

Many nations do not recognize foreign currency, and will actually exchange valuable foreign coins for their own on a one-for-one basis. The veteran traveler will learn the pitfalls of such practices. Going to Lemish with one's 500 Solamnic steel pieces means you might have to exchange them for 500 Lemish steel pieces, definitely a bad deal!

CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATES BY NATION

Here are the noteworthy countries in Ansalon and the types and names of each coin minted in each country. Each country's coins are rated in value against that nation's steel piece.

Coins from each nation vary in form, name, and general use from those of other nations. Size of coins varies with the relative value against the international Steel Standard value. Coin metals are selected from valuable ores and resources in high demand. But steel and iron remain the most common currencies.

A wide variety of other valuable ores and materials are used as coinage by the different nations. Besides gold, steel, and iron, these include: coal, tin, nickel, copper, brass, bronze, silver, electrum, platinum, adamantine, ivory, cowrie shells, conch shells, hacksilver, jade, agate, and garnets.

HUMAN-GOVERNED NATIONS OR EMPIRES

The lands controlled by the Knights of Solamnia, the Dragon Empire, and the Empire of Ergoth also serve as home to a variety of barbarian tribes, various humanoid cultures, and others who rely primarily on a barter system. The coinage listed is used primarily in the cities, with farmers and others in the countryside accepting coins as well as barter.

The lands traditionally within the sphere of influence of the Knights of Solamnia, including the city states of Palanthas and Kalaman, use currencies established by the Knights of Solamnia.

The Empire of Ergoth is one of the few nations remaining on Ansalon that treats pre-Cataclysm coinage as valid currency—as long as the coinage was minted at the Imperial Mint of the former capital of Daltigoth.

A special note about Saifhum: As the mariners of Saifhum also engage in a fair amount of piracy throughout the Blood Sea area, many merchants in the capital of Sea Reach will frequently treat coins from the Dragon Empire, Empire of Ergoth, the Minotaur Isles, and the Knight Lands as if it was currency of their own realm.

Finally, prior to the War of the Lance, the merchants in Haven and Gateway would honor only coinage mint-

ed by the Seekers in Haven. All other coins had to be exchanged by money lenders, who would give travelers only twenty-five percent of the value of their coins in steel Emas.

Empire of Ergoth: 1 steel disk = 2 platinum platters = 5 gold gills = 5 iron rounds = 10 electrum ambers = 20 brasses = 25 silvers = 50 backsilvers = 100 coppers = 400 tinny's

Dragon Empire: 1 steel weight = 1/5 platinum wt. = 1/2 iron wt. = 2 bronze wt. = 10 gold wt. = 20 silver wt. = 100 copper wt.

Sancrist, Solamnia, and Eastwatch (the Knight Lands): 1 steel sword (or 1 silver Monarch) = 2 platinum Florins = 5 iron Divks = 10 bronze donjons (or 10 silver Castles) = 20 gold kronin = 25 electrum marks = 50 silver tharns/shields = 100 copper commons = 400 nickel quinces

Lemish: 1 steel brand = 1/50 adamantine guard = 1/2 platinum florn = 2 iron stamps = 5 bronze dolars = 10 gold kronen = 20 electrum marks = 25 silver stars = 50 copper pence = 200 tin commons

Saifhum: 1 steel disk = 5 iron rounds = 10 bronze dolons = 20 silvers = 100 coppers

Seeker Lands: 1 steel emas = 1/2 platinum moon = 2 iron hammers = 5 bronze plates = 10 copper helms = 50 silver stars.

DWARVEN KINGDOMS

Each of the dwarven kingdoms are home to several different dwarven cultural groups, but they all acknowledge the standard currency. The exception to this are the Aghar who engage in virtually nothing that other races and cultures recognize as commerce or barter.

Kaolyn: 1 steel anvil = 1/10 adamantine forge = 1/5 garnet chip = 5 iron ingots = 15 gold crowns = 20 silver bucklers = 50 bronze gauntlets = 100 copper slugs = 200 nickel rivets

Thorbardin: 1 steel anvil = 1/20 adamantine forge = 1/5 agate chip = 2 iron ingots = 5 bronze gauntlets = 10 copper slugs = 20 nickel rivets = 25 gold crowns = 50 silver bucklers = 100 coal pails

Zhakar: 1 steel bar = 1/10 jade chip = 2 iron bars = 10 bronze bars = 25 brass bars = 50 copper slugs = 50 silver slugs = 100 tin slugs = 200 coal rations

ELVEN NATIONS

Although Silvanesti once sent trade missions to the far reaches of Ansalon, the Cataclysm caused them to turn almost entirely inward. Only Port Balifor and one or two other city states along the Bay of Balifor were visited by occasional Silvanesti merchant vessels while virtually no overland trade took place. The Silvanesti towns trade mostly with each other, and all citizens use coinage to complete transactions.

Silvanesti: 1 steel crest = 1/10 ivory tooth = 1/5 platinum moon = 5 iron rings = 10 gold crowns = 20 electrum solars = 50 silver stars = 100 brass seals = 200 copper shells

MINOTAUR ISLES

When Emperor Chot Es-Kalin united the two minotaur nations of Kothas and Mithas under one banner shortly after the War of the Lance, he also established a single currency. The Saifhum colony on Mithas accepts both the minotaur coinage and the monetary system of Saifhum.

Mithas and Kothas: 1 steel sabre = 2 iron wards = 10 bronze shields = 20 gold crowns = 50 electrum lances = 100 brass darts = 200 copper arrows

FINAL COMMENT

This is but a general overview of a vast topic worthy of a book in and of itself. If the history of Krynn teaches us anything, it is that currencies and commerce change dramatically with the fate of peoples and nations. Today's common denomination will be tomorrow's collector's item. And, to vary an old kender saying, the top coin of a fallen despot is less precious to the hound than a gleaming houndstooth.

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My dear Regina,

I hope I find you well.

Papa tells me that he is sending military dispatches to your papa. I take advantage of this fact to write a letter to you, my dearest friend, to tell you what I have been doing and, most importantly, of the latest fashions the noblewomen of Palanthas are wearing, which will set the fashions for all of Solamnia. I have enclosed some drawings for you to pass on to your seamstress. There have been some important changes in dresses, as you will see!

First I start with the chemise (the underdress). As usual, the chemise is made of linen or another lightweight fabric. The chemise continues to be very plain with no decoration and is cut out of a single piece of cloth, including the long skirt, the bodice, and the sleeves.



But this is where the change comes. The upper part of the chemise is no longer loose but now fits quite close to the body with very tight sleeves that extend down past the wrist and even lap over the back of the hand. A gusset has been added to the sleeves in order to allow for ease of movement. The gusset is a triangular piece of material fit into the sleeve beneath the arm, which enlarges the area beneath the sleeve.

Make certain that the length of the chemise sleeves is cut several inches longer than your arm. Thus you may push the sleeve up and allow for a bend in the elbow. The sleeves are very tight due to the fact that it is considered highly impolite to drag your sleeve through your food while eating! The sleeves are buttoned from the wrist to the elbow with a vast number of small buttons.

The skirt for the chemise is floor length, and the cut of the skirt is much fuller than in past years, allowing for a great many folds.

Now, the most important part—the dress itself. You will need ten yards of material for a single gown, either brocade or velvet. Both are very popular this

year. The gown is fitted at the shoulders and flows loose down around the body with a two-to three-foot train in back. A jeweled girdle is worn around the waist to show off how slender the waist is and to provide a lovely, soft draped effect to the gown.

But the most stunning part of the new fashion this year is the sleeves! Each sleeve fits tight at the shoulder and then opens up at the elbow into the shape of a bell. The bottom of the sleeve can sometimes touch the floor, it is so long. The sleeve's hem is not straight and plain anymore. The tailors are cutting the material of the sleeve into wonderful shapes such as acorns or oak leaves, and then repeating this shape all the way around the hem of the sleeve. These points are known as "dags," and sometimes the tailor adds piping (trim) of a different color in order to accentuate the design.

Because the lining of the sleeve is visible, the lining is often of silk or velvet and is usually a contrasting color to the sleeve. The sleeves are really quite beautiful but, as you will find, all the fabric and decoration make the sleeves very heavy and unwieldy. If they were part of the gown, you would be unable to move your arms and the sleeves themselves would most certainly tear and rip at the shoulders. Therefore—and this is very clever—the sleeves are made separately! We pin the sleeves onto the shoulders of the gown with jeweled pins that match the belt. The effect is quite stunning.

The headdress for unmarried maidens this year is very simple and flattering. The hair is worn loose. We wear a veil of silk or linen trimmed in lace or beads over the head. A circlet of gold and jewels (again, this can be made to match the girdle and the sleeve pins), is worn to keep the veil in place.

My shoes are of very soft leather with the very slightest of points at the toes. Some of the noble youths are wearing shoes with ridiculously long points. One of my suitors (one I cannot stand!) wears shoes with points so long that he has to lift his feet like a heron to walk, and he constantly trips himself going up the stairs.

The noble men wear either ankle-length or knee-length tunics with the same fashion in sleeves as the women. The men wear woolen or linen hose or chausses which are tied to a belt to keep them from falling down around the ankles.

For cold weather or when traveling, men and women continue to wear the circular cloak—a cloak made of wool cut from a single piece of cloth in the shape of a large full circle with a single hole for the head and two small slits for the hands. Sometimes an opening in the front is added to make walking easier. Papa had a long strip cut from the side of his cloak in order to allow freedom of movement for his sword arm. The cloaks are held in place by large jeweled pins.

Hoods with long points at the back are popular for both men and women and can be worn separately or are sometimes buttoned onto the shoulders of the cloak itself.

I hope this gives you some idea of what the fashionable men and women are wearing in Palanthas. I have seven of these gowns myself; three of velvet and four of brocade, and Papa has promised that I shall have a new one for Yule.

I miss you exceedingly, especially our visits to the Palanthas library. It was such fun teasing the monks! Mama and I have started embroidering a new tapestry for the wall, portraying the Legend of Sturm Brightblade and the White Siag. I believe that it will take us years to finish!

Oh, I must tell you, but you must keep this secret! I managed to rid myself of my duenna the other day—I sent her off to buy sugared almonds—and I sneaked into a mageware shop and bought—what do you think? A love charm! Mama would faint if she knew that I'd even been in one of those disreputable shops! It was very spooky and dark inside, with a lot of funny smells. There were a great many jars on shelves on the walls. I took care not to look too closely for I have heard that they keep horrible things inside those jars—newt eyes and dead bats and spiders and things.

I asked the woman who runs the shop for a love charm and she wrote one out on a piece of parchment for me. On midnight when Lunitari is full I am supposed to say the name of the person I love three times and then burn the parchment. He will come to me the next day and throw himself at my feet. He won't be able to help himself! I don't need to tell you whose name I will say! I believe that I will wear the blue velvet gown with the pink silk sleeves that day while I await his arrival. Also my very best shoes.

Wish me luck!

Yours in friendship ever,
Cordelia



Khas is Krynn's version of chess. It is played with the same types and numbers of pieces as chess (eight pawns, two rooks, two knights, two bishops, and one king and queen on each side), but it is played on a hexagonal field with each troop starting in opposing corners of the board.

The Solamnic Knights believe that the game reflects battles being fought somewhere in the world. Indeed, legends tell that great battles of history have been won or lost because of a Khas game being played elsewhere. Yarus's board was three feet across and made of finest carved ivory inlaid with polished blue and cream marble. The pieces themselves were intricately crafted blue and cream granite.

Virkbus (the Horn of Dawn) was the Lord Knight of the Rose in the Tower of the High Clerist at the time of the Cataclysm. He was Yarus's closest friend and confidant. Virkbus was a defender of the weak and an untiring foe of Evil and injustice. Some knew him as Yarus's "33rd piece," a term that referred to the knight's ability to influence great events in favor of Good.

Virkbus uses the Horn of Dawn to call the Legion of Virkbus who were the most fearsome warriors known in the land. Before each battle, Virkbus would sound his horn to call forth his troops. The fate of Virkbus is unknown, although he disappeared at the time of the Cataclysm.



Game Board. The game has a hexagonal board with opposing corners. The game also uses thirty-two playing pieces, sixteen for each side, and they have a rough equivalence to the pieces from a chess game. There is also reference to a legendary thirty-third playing piece modeled after a general from history.

A true chessboard has alternating colors, no color adjacent to itself. Drawing a hex pattern and numbering the spaces so that there will be a non-adjacent color pattern results in the following:

This board yields three different colors. That holds with the colors of the board in the quote; it was made "... of finest carved ivory inlaid with polished blue and cream marble." Yarus's board used his personal colors, but it seems more logical to believe that a traditional Khas board uses colors commonly found in Krynn lore—white (the color of good), red or gray (the color of balance), and black (the color of Evil). This also suggests an order—(1) white, (2) red or gray (between Good and Evil), and (3) black.

In chess, the queens sit on their own color opposite each other on the board. This can be echoed in the Khas game if the opposite corners are opposite colors (white vs. black embodies the struggle between Good and Evil). There are 64 spaces on a traditional chessboard with 32 empty. A hexagonal board with 5 to a side has 61 spaces with 29 empty. The corners would alternate black and white with a red space in the center.

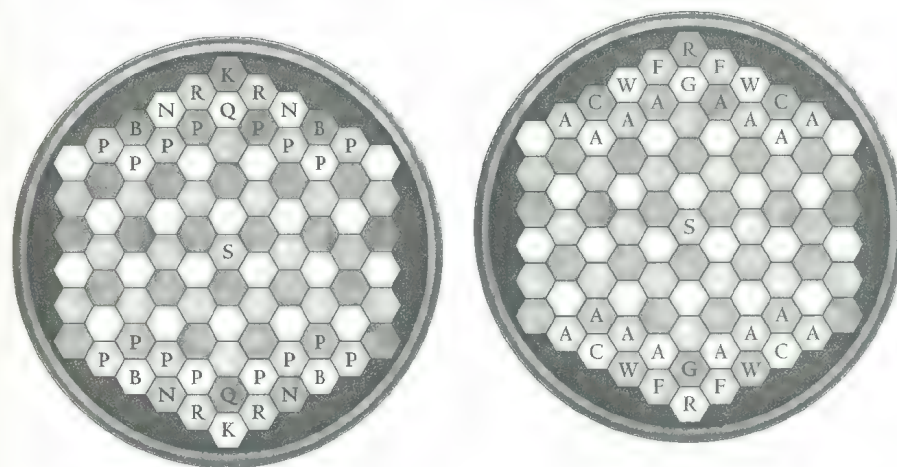
Game Setup. The playing pieces are apparently analogous to standard chess pieces in form and number. Therefore, each side would have a King (K), a Queen

(Q), two Bishops (B), two Knights (N), two Rooks (R), and eight Pawns (P). While there is some parallel to chess, the placement of pieces at the start of the game needed to be altered, because using a corner of the board for setup of troops presents an odd number of spaces in the back row for an even number of pieces.

1. The King (K), which is the prize of the game and should therefore be protected from capture, is placed on its own color in opposing corners of the board; the Good King is set on a white space, and the Evil King on a black space.
2. The Queen (Q) is ignored for a moment since it is the odd-numbered partner of the King, the court pieces, two Bishops (B), Knights (N), and Rooks (R), are pairs of pieces. One can be placed to either side of the King (K) along the back rows.

However, since a Bishop moves in a diagonal direction, all avenues of egress would be blocked by multiple pieces if placed in its traditional location. This prevents a Bishop from being free to move after the movement of a single pawn. Therefore, I chose to reverse the position of the Bishops and the Rooks, setting the Rook beside the King and the Bishop in the Rook's former place at the end of the row.

3. The eight Pawns (P) are then placed four to either side in front of the court pieces to screen them, with a pawn in the right and left corners of the back rows.
4. This leaves only the space in front of the King (K) vacant. This seems to be the only location for the Queen (Q). However, in this position the Queen will be vulnerable for an exchange at the start of the game, and therefore of little worth unless protected from capture by some obstacle.
5. The dilemma of the Queen's vulnerabilities suggested an answer to where the thirty-third piece must be located. This piece, called the Shield (S), is an immobile piece that can neither be captured nor capture another. It serves merely as a barrier in the middle of the board.



Game Pieces Movement & Abilities. These were designed with parallels to standard chess pieces. In order to grant this game its own identity different from chess, the pieces were renamed to reflect the key forces on the battlefields of Krynn.

Rules of Khas.

1. The direction a piece faces is important. Each playing piece has a hexagonal base with an arrow indicating its front. A playing piece's direction may be changed only at the end of its movement. Turning a piece to change its direction is considered a move. Only 1 piece may be moved, subject to its movement limitations, each turn.
2. When any piece ends its move on a space occupied by an opposing piece, the opponent's piece is captured and is usually removed from the game board. Some game pieces may be captured only by being attacked from a flank;

their front and rear sides are said to be "armored" or protected from capture.

3. Movement of most playing pieces is blocked by any other piece on the board. Only the equivalent of a Knight, called a Wyrn, can fly over another piece. The center block or Shield can not be crossed even by a Wyrn (Knight).
 4. Kings (K) = Relics (R), the prize of the battle. The game ends when the opponent's Relic is captured. This piece moves like a King, 1 space in any direction, capturing any foe onto whose space it moves. A Relic has two armored faces: its front and back. A Relic may be captured only if the attacking piece enters the Relic's space from one of the 4 flanking sides.
- A Relic may be "hidden" beside a Fortress (Rook) as a move once during a game. "Hiding" a Relic is similar to "Castling" in a traditional chess game. To "Hide" a Relic, nei-

ther the Relic nor the Fortress may have moved from its back row during the game. "Hiding" exchanges the position of the Relic and the Fortress as that turn's move.

5. Queens (Q) = Guardians or the Gods (G) who defend the Relics from capture. A Guardian moves like a queen: diagonally or straight forward and backward any number of spaces. Like a Relic, a Guardian has two armored faces, its front and back, and may be captured only with attacks from a flank.

In a traditional game of Khas, Guardians are agents of the Gods and therefore immortal. When a Guardian is captured it must be placed on the board in any location of the opponent's choice. Modern versions often ignore this rule.

6. Rooks (R) = Fortresses (F) represent the strongholds of the armies. A Fortress moves similar to a Rook, but can move only forward or backward any number of spaces, or it may move just 1 space to either side.
7. Knights (N) = Wyrms (W) are the great dragons who sided with the gods in their struggle for conquest of Krynn. A Wyrm is similar but not identical to a Knight. A Wyrm can move 2 spaces in any direction, flying over intervening pieces, and then 1 space diagonally or 1 space in any direction and 2 spaces diagonally.

This makes a Wyrm more powerful than its Knight counterpart. While a Knight can leap to any one of 8 spaces and is unable to move to the other 16 spaces surrounding it, a Wyrm can fly to any one of 18 spaces between the 18 spaces along the radii from its starting space. But this is Krynn where the dragons are lords of the land!

8. Bishops (B) = Champions (C) of the two realms who lead their Armies to battle. A Champion moves like a Bishop; movement is only diagonally any number of spaces.
9. Pawns (P) = Armies (A), the warriors which move like waves across the battlefield. An Army has the same movement rules as a pawn.

On its first move only, it can move 1 or 2 spaces forward or attack 1 space diagonally. After an Army's first move, it can move only 1 space a turn. It may move only 1 space forward if unopposed. An Army may capture another piece only by attacking diagonally forward 1 space; it can not attack by moving straight forward.

In Yarus's version of the game he was able to bring the thirty-third piece into play, probably with a rule like this: An army may be sacrificed if it reaches the other side of the board. Sacrificing an Army from the forces of Good, allows the forces of Good to take control of and move the Shield piece in its defense. Sacrificing an Army from the forces of Evil, allows Evil's player to remove the Shield from the board.

10. The Block = the Shield (S), a pylon in the center that protects the Guardians (G). The Shield can move up to 2 spaces in any direction. It cannot capture any piece in the game, and it is armored on all sides so that it cannot be captured by any other piece.

The rules to this game are also similar to chess. The Good (white) side always moves first, and then turns alternate between players, with each side moving only one piece during a turn. The first side to capture the opponent's Relic or eliminate all of the opponent's other pieces wins the game.

Variants on Khas throughout the Ages

The game of Khas is very old. While this version dates from the Third Dragon War (Huma's War) there were undoubtedly earlier versions. It is likely that the look of the playing pieces changed with each age, since they were supposed to represent forces battling somewhere in the world. It is also likely that if the game became popular with the common folk, stylized versions of each piece, perhaps based on the elements, were developed for simplicity of carving or casting. That said, here are likely forms for versions through the ages.

Game variants/other games using the Khas board

While the basic rules probably did not change much over the ages, additional rules may have been created to better reflect the times. Some examples might be:

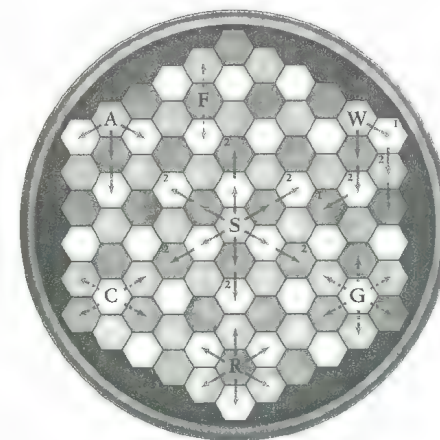
Lightning or Drum Khas: This is a speed game. Each turn the opponent taps out five sets of a slow four count. Failure to move in that time results in forfeiture of move that turn.

Dragonqueen: The turn following the capture of any Good piece(s), the Evil player may move a second piece as well. The turn following the capture of any Evil piece, the Good player may call "Pax" and then for one round (two turns) no piece may be captured.

Chaos or Graystone Khas: The rules are the same, but each time a piece is captured it must be placed back on the board in any open space of the attacking player's choice.

Bloodshed: In this odd variation, there is a rule that if a piece can be captured, then the opponent must make the capture at the first opportunity. Failure to make a mandatory capture forces the player to return the piece he moved and then make the capture.

Yarus's Play: In this version the "sacrifice" rule is in effect to activate the thirty-third piece. Once the Shield is either in play or off the board, other Armies may be sacrificed to bring back any captured court piece, exchanging the pawn for the appropriate piece.



KHAS GAME PIECES THROUGHOUT THE AGES

TRADITIONAL NAME		WAR OF THE LANCE	WAR OF PEOPLES	WAR OF STABILITY	STYLIZED ELEMENT
KING	RELIC	Dragonlance Foundation Stone	Dragonlance Dragon Orb	Star	Chest
QUEEN	GUARDIAN	Paladine Takhisis	Paladine Takhisis	Dragon	Horn Talon
BISHOP _K	CHAMPION	Raistlin & Caramon Verminard & Ember	Heart Slag	Elf	Wings
BISHOP _Q	CHAMPION	Goldmoon & Riverwind Ariakas & Firestorm	Huorn Charr	Elf	Wings
KNIGHT _K	WYRM	Laurana & Cymbol Kitiara & Skie	Huma Crynus	Dwarf	Fire- Brand
KNIGHT _Q	WYRM	Sturm & Gilt Lord Soth & Doom	Kaz Sir Renard	Dwarf	Fire- Brand
ROOK _K	FORTRESS	Tika at Wayreth Sivak at Flying Citadel	Magius Dracos	Ogre	Pillar
ROOK _Q	FORTRESS	Tanis at High Clerist Aurak at Dargaard Keep	Pistandantulus Gunther	Ogre	Pillar
PAWN _{K1}	ARMY	Flint (dwarf) Toede (hobgoblin)	Footman Goblin	Man	Goblet
PAWN _{K2}	ARMY	Tasslehoff (kender) Galldrake (draconian)	Footman Hound	Man	Goblet
PAWN _{K3}	ARMY	Arman Kharas (dwarf) Realgar (dark dwarf)	Footman Goblin	Man	Goblet
PAWN _{K4}	ARMY	Kronin Thistleknott (kender) Grimcairn (draconian)	Footman Hound	Man	Goblet
PAWN _{Q1}	ARMY	Bupu (gully dwarf) Rance (dark dwarf)	Footman Goblin	Man	Goblet
PAWN _{Q2}	ARMY	Trapspringer (kender) Asptung (draconian)	Footman Hound	Man	Goblet
PAWN _{Q3}	ARMY	Hornfel/Badger (dwarf) Groag (hobgoblin)	Footman Goblin	Man	Goblet
PAWN _{Q4}	ARMY	Taywin (kender) Lorac Caladon	Footman Hound	Man	Goblet
33 RD PIECE	SHIELD	War Machine	General	Void	Horse



ON FILE: GNOME OFFICE OF
PATENTS, PROCUREMENTS, AND OFF-TRACK BETTING

THE PANCAKE WARS

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day, in Mount Nevermind just like anywhere else, for, as all gnomes know, nothing prepares you for a full day of tinkering like a hearty breakfast! It's easy to guess, then, that Mount Nevermind is rife with early-morning eateries. Every neighborhood has its favorite spots for bacon and emri eggs and morning tarbean tea. Naturally, the competition between the restaurants is fierce, and all breakfast chefs jealously guard their secret house recipes from the greedy eyes of enemy establishments.

And, when I say fierce, I mean fierce. Even family ties can snap under the pressure of something like the Pancake Wars.

The Pancake Wars started out innocently enough. One morning, a pleasant little restaurant decided to launch a new advertising campaign.

"Best Pancakes on Level 26!" proclaimed a sign in the big front window of the eatery owned by a gnome named Batterexcellenceismygoalinthequestforsuperiorcakes. Business

boomed for the enterprising gnome chef as customers filled his tables, eager to sample the best.

Well, the sign was nothing short of a declaration of war to the restaurant down the street, an establishment belonging to Batter's brother, Woodenspoon-maker with great ambition toward breakfast chefdom. Not to be outdone, Woody put up a sign of his own: "Breakfast Special, Hot from Our State-of-the-Art Pancake Oven!"

What self-respecting gnome could resist such an invitation? A state-of-the-art oven! Chagrined at having supported an eatery that used outdated pancake-making technology, patrons piled into Woody's from all over Level 26. Woody, for his part, had been hard at work the entire previous night, inventing a new device for hotcake cooking that would deliver perfectly browned disks of pan perfection every time. By dawn, through the grace of Reortz, he had done it. Woody was so proud of his resulting invention that he ushered his first batch of customers into the kitchen for a tour before serving them.

An awed "Ooooooooo!" washed over the crowd at the sight of Woody's achievement: the Gyro-Regulated Inversion Down-Draft Levitational Engine, Mark III. (Mark I had exploded around midnight, and Mark II had suffered a meltdown close to 3 a.m.) Upon the diner's conventional stovetop sat the marvelous new oven, a clear glass cylinder covered with dials and readouts mounted atop what appeared to be a clunky fan with batter-covered blades.

"The GRIDDLE," Woody explained, wiping the sweat from his brow (inadvertently smearing it instead with flour from his sleeve), "is a powerful convection system. The engine, here—" he gestured at the device's fan-shaped base, "—blows hot air from the oven, here—" and he waved his hand grandiosely at the stove "—up into the glass tube." The gnome chef demonstrated by flipping a switch on the remote control device in his hand, its cord connecting to the fan base. The fan began to spin, and its rattle and whirl soon caused the cylinder to rock dangerously.

"Now we add the batter. ..." Woody continued, oblivious to the racket on the stove. On cue, an assistant cook carrying a big metal bowl appeared from the

crowd. Hopping up on a stool, she dabbed a wooden spoonful of batter into the top of the tube. The glob fell a few inches, then was caught and suspended in the convection current. The cake batter rolled end over end inside the GRIDDLE, quivering in the rush of the hot air and slowly turning that perfect shade of cake-gold.

The customers broke out in frenzied jabbering. "A vertical griddle!" they exclaimed. "How marvelous!"

"Such golden perfection all around!"

"I must have a double order!"

The proud chef puffed out his chest like a pouter pigeon and beamed a satisfied smile at his guests. He could already taste the fame and recognition his new GRIDDLE would bring him—and the flavor was sweeter than even his perfect cakes. Until...

"Mine's kinda lumpy."

The comment came from an off-duty fry-cook, munching on his morning snack in a corner of Woody's kitchen. Young Smallfry, who one day shall have a breakfast place of his own, had worked all night with his employer, helping the chef assemble his dream oven. From drawing board to prototype in a single night (and through only three Marks!) was an achievement nearly unheard of in Mount Nevermind, and as his reward for a job well done, Smallfry had been given the first cake off the GRIDDLE to try.

A heavy silence weighed upon the kitchen at the boy's pronouncement. "Lumpy?!" cried the incredulous Woody, glaring without seeing at the small mound of golden dough swimming in syrup on the boy's plate. "Impossible! Look at that perfect golden texture! It's the exact hue of brass dragonhide! You obviously have no place in the breakfast business, ungrateful wretch! Get out!" And to punctuate the command, the irate cook hurled at his young charge the only thing he had handy to throw at the moment: the GRIDDLE's remote control.

I don't have to describe to you the clattering disaster the kitchen became the moment that fateful toss brought the off-balance oven crashing to the ground. You can picture for yourself the scatterings of broken glass, the batter-spattered guests, unhappy to have their breakfasts on their outsides rather than their

insides. Smallfry's only consolation was that he was able to scoot out of Woody's restaurant before the wrathful chef could find something even more damaging to throw at him.

Now, being a clever lad, Smallfry immediately presented himself for employment up the street at Batter's, where the envious restaurateur was fretting over Woody's escalation of his opening salvo. Not only was Batter delighted to hear of the demise of the Mark III, he was pleased as a dwarf at a game of kick-the-kender to learn his brother's trade secrets from the miffed young aide. In gratitude, he even promoted Smallfry to assistant cook.

So, while Woody labored over the Mark IV, Batter and Smallfry were hard at work on Kryn's latest piece of breakfast-making technology. The next day, Batter was proud to unveil the Super-Pancake Automated Turner with Unique Lateral Action.

"Using this SPATULA," Batter told his gawking guests, "we ensure not only the golden-brownness of the cakes, but also their symmetrically pleasing round-and... er... flatness." Like most gnomes, Batter liked to talk about his inventions almost as much as he liked actually inventing them. So, while he elaborated on the physical wonder that was his new pancake cooker, the appreciative audience took in the chef's recent stove enhancements. The cooktop, rather than resting right on the stove, was suspended a quarter of an inch above it by a pair of heavy, iron, floor-standing clamps. Extending out from the bottom of the stove were two sturdy-looking steel rails, which curved gracefully up and over the entire unit. Protruding from the back of the stove was a large, inexplicable crank-wheel. The guests marveled at this work of kitchen gadgetry.

During his boss's spiel, Smallfry bustled about mixing batter. Finally he poured a generous serving onto the cooktop, and for about a minute the group watched the batter bubble cheerily.

The suspense—or perhaps the hunger—was just too much for one customer. "But what about the Unique Lateral Action?" he asked, sniffing appreciatively at the cake's cinnamon aroma.

Batter, ceasing his mechanical rhapsody, just smiled and nodded to Smallfry. The assistant cook motioned

to six burly gnomes in white aprons, who stepped forward to gather around the crank-wheel. At a sign from Smallfry, they all heaved on the wheel, turning it clockwise. Ever so slowly, the stove began to rise on the rails.

"The secret of the SPATULA," Batter explained, "is never to move the pancake from the cooking surface. Instead, we move the heat source around the pancake, resulting in a cake browned evenly on all sides." He held up his hand, and the crankers, sweating a bit from the heat of the stove's wood fire, locked the wheel into place. The stove now hung on its track at a ninety-degree angle from the floor. After a brief rest, the breakfast maestro gestured to his turners once more, and they resumed their cranking.

Almost in time, Smallfry spotted the problem. Almost.

"Chef Bat—" the lad began, just as the door to the wood-burning stove swung open and dumped its full load of half-burned logs and ash onto the nicely browned, round, and flat cake. Seeing the fiery cascade tumbling at them, the crankers sprang back from the wheel in a panic. Frantic to put out the sparks that had landed on them, they hopped about and flapped their aprons, giving the impression of farmers' wives shooing chickens. Without their strong arms to hold it, the stove raced back down its track again and crashed thunderously to the floor, spewing out a volcano of soot onto cooks and clientele alike.

"Smallfry, you've ruined me!" came a wail from behind the cloud of ash. "My brother sent you here to sabotage me! Just wait till I get my hands on you, you little. ..."

There were many things running through Smallfry's mind at that moment, but waiting for Batter to get his hands on him was not one of them. The young gnome dashed between distraught and still-hungry customers and shot out the restaurant's front door.

But Smallfry was not a gnome to stay down for long. After a brief stop at home for a wash-up and a plate of eggs (the lad having somehow lost his appetite for pancakes), he whistled his way across Level 26, to a cafe run by a gnome named

Adashofsaltandapinchofcinnamonmakeforstandout-pancakes.

Dash was seated at the counter of her empty restaurant, trying futilely to come up with an idea to attract the crowds so enamored of Woody and Batter. Thus, while the two brothers continued to escalate the Pancake Wars by going for bigger and better versions of their original inventions*, Junior Chef Smallfry was introducing his new employer to the Next Big Thing in pancake making...

"Ladies and gentlemen," said Dash at the unveiling of her entry into the battle of the breakfasts, "I give you—the Trampomatic!" A smattering of applause greeted the latest breakthrough in hotcake high-tech, as the excited chef yanked down the curtain that had obscured her new marvel. Erected over her stove was a great trampoline, extending two feet beyond either side of the cooktop. Steaming nicely on the tramp were three perfect pancakes, and standing on the far ends of the tramp were three nervous gnomes. Smallfry leaned contentedly against a work counter nearby that was strewn with breakfast fixings, holding in his arms a big bowl of extra batter.

Choosing action over oration, Dash gestured at her aides mounted stoveside, and in unison, they began their cautious jumps. With each bounce from them, the pancakes sprang into the air several inches. "Jump harder!" Dash called over the noise of the trampoline's squeaking springs. "The cakes need more loft!" Obliging, the jumpers really put their legs into it, and the pancakes gained altitude.

Still, the crowd—hardened as they now were by a week's worth of devastating displays of pancake pyrotechnics—was not impressed. The pancakes had not yet flipped. "The tramp needs more tension," muttered Dash, as she strode forward, wrench in hand, to adjust her invention. As she worked, the bouncing cakes began to smoke.

Perhaps if Smallfry had had the time to eat a whole breakfast that morning, he wouldn't have felt moved to do what he did next, but the fact remains that he and Dash were adjusting the Trampomatic until just before the doors opened to the breakfast crowd. So, one can understand that the lad, starving as he was,

could not bear to see those lovely cakes go to waste. Glancing furiously about the work counter, he grabbed the first thing he saw and rushed in to flip the burning cakes.

As it happens, the first thing Smallfry saw was a blueberry masher, lying out next to a bowl of mashed blueberries left over from the morning's juicing. (Dash insisted upon mashing blueberries each morning to make her blueberry juice fresh. She never understood why the juice didn't go over with her customers.) But as he leaned toward the stove, Dash completed her final twist with the wrench and stood, knocking him right into one of the tramping gnomes.

Down went Smallfry, spilling his bowl of batter all over the trampoline's cook surface. Down went the gnome, who yelped and scuttled off the hot center of the tramp. One flailing leg caught the bowl of mashed blueberries and launched it at the stove, hopelessly mixing the purple mess with the pristine batter. Not wanting to stay long enough to answer for yet another batter blunder, Smallfry ducked off the tramp and, masher still in hand, crept shamefully out of Dash's place, knowing he was bidding farewell forever to his career as a chef.

Well, with the owners of Mount Nevermind's leading breakfast places consumed with building up their armaments for each successive stage of battle, the Pancake Wars were brought to a screeching halt by simple economics. No longer willing to pay twenty steel for a pancake (and, at that, one that was likely to wind up covered in soot or delivered into the diner's face via high-speed convection current), the fickle public woke up one morning and decided it felt like waffles instead. Batter, Woody, and Dash all suffered a major downturn in business, and as of this writing, all three are endeavoring to convert their wondrous pancake cookers into state-of-the-art waffle irons.

And what, you may ask, became of Smallfry? Well, as it happens, one of Dash's customers that fatal morning was none other than Jarrig Thingmach, head of Mount Nevermind's Grand Council. After sampling some of the strange blueberry-pancake mixture (he was apparently as hungry as Smallfry that day), he caught up with the erstwhile young chef on the street

outside the restaurant, and there and then offered him a job as Head Chef at the Grand Councillor's estate. In between experimental breakfasts (yesterday's "corned beef hash" was declared a thumbs-down by the staff), Smallfry has been known to advise the Grand Councillor on the nature of the Next Big Thing.

And, in case you're wondering, whenever he makes blueberry pancakes for the Grand Councillor, he flips them with his trusty masher. It's a handy little item.

* The convection cylinder of the GRIDDLE, Mark VII filled almost Woody's whole kitchen and kept dozens of pancakes aloft until the pipe that vented volcanic steam directly from Mount Nevermind's lower levels burst its coupling, shooting steam-cooked cakes at high velocity into the dining room. Meanwhile, Batter improved his SPATULA design by developing an immense stationary pancake cooktop surrounded by a rotating kitchen-sized stove—a design that forced the cooks to wear suction cups on their feet to tread gingerly across the ceiling to tend the fire (now behind a latched door). The eatery was forced to close in the middle of the breakfast rush one day, due to a large-scale flour spill during the kitchens upside-down phase that caused the entire staff to lose its suction-cupped footing and spill to the floor.

MEMORANDUM

To: Highleader of a most important guild,
Committee of Patent Applications for
New Inventions to Improve and Protect
the Gnomish Standard of Living in
Mount Nevermind.

From:

*Donttouchthatyetithasntbeentestedorbrough
tuptocode, Head of the Division of
Devices that Need to have Patents to
Protect that Device's Integrity.*

INVENTIONS FROM THE
COMMUNICATIONS GUILD

MUGAPHONE

It was first noticed by the Innkeepers' Guild that the presence of beer in a room tends to make people's voices louder, especially if they are also involved in the consumption of beer. The Brewmasters' Guild theorizes that sound is amplified and transported by the bubbles in beer, and that it is in fact the residue of beer in the mouth and throat which causes the amplification of the drinker's voice. Numerous tests were performed to try to determine how best to take advantage of this curious effect. Lecture halls were sprayed with a fine mist of beer in order to help those in the back of the room better hear the speaker. This soon led to an infestation of gully dwarves who, like sharks on a chum trail, followed the foamy beer runoff through sewage channels beneath the mountain, thereby gaining entrance into the mountain.

Finally, an ingenious device was designed by the Potters' Guild. Its shape is based on that of a large beer mug with the bottom knocked out. A small reservoir was added to the handle, into which is poured a quantity of beer. By speaking into the small end of the mugaphone, the voice is carried over the reservoir of beer, where it is amplified. And, should the speaker's throat become dry from all that shouting, he can always quench his thirst from the reservoir. This invention has led to an overwhelming influx of public announcements.

A SELF-PROPELLED, STEAM-POWERED
PORTABLE DOOR KNOCKER

Who among us hasn't at times scraped his or her knuckles raw rapping on the door of a friend or neighbor's house? Or, to turn the problem around, who hasn't sometimes missed an important caller because the knocking was too soft to be heard from the furthest reaches of the house? Now, such problems are over—all one need do is to take along one of the portable door knockers described herein when calling on others to ensure that raw knuckles and unheard rappings are things of the past.

The central component of the portable door knocker is, naturally (as with any truly well-engineered device), a steam generator. Originally, this generator was to be of modest size, capable of being carried by a single individual, but for reasons that shall become evident, it had to be scaled up to full industrial proportions to support the necessary auxiliary functions. To operate the knocker assembly, steam from the generator's boiler passes through a conduit to a cylinder, where it drives a piston. This is in turn connected to a wooden beam, which moves back and forth with the motion of the piston. By placing the entire apparatus a suitable distance from a door, the back and forth movement of the beam causes the end of it to bang against the door, producing a sound sufficient to be heard anywhere in the building. (Note: It is suggested that the end of the beam be well padded to reduce damage to the door. Nevertheless, several individuals complained when a prototype door knocker inadvertently burst doors off their hinges in trial runs.

This drawback can be mitigated by attaching a steam whistle directly to the boiler, the early use of which will give the person inside the house time to answer the door before application of the knocker commences. This way, the needs of all parties can be accommodated without compromising the integrity of the device.

As noted previously, early versions of the door knocker were modest-sized affairs intended to be carried under one's arm. However, the weight of the boiler and the need for providing coal with which to stoke it prevented this plan. The knocker was therefore

mounted on a small wagon that could be pulled when venturing to another's house. This, too, proved ineffective as the small stature of myself and my fellow gnomes made pulling the wagon difficult. Two suggestions for overcoming this liability are to use a team of gnomes to help pull the wagon when going out to visit, or to yoke the wagon to a horse. Both suggestions overlook a critical feature of the knocker, however: the presence of a steam-generating device just waiting to be harnessed for additional uses. By employing a larger boiler, the oscillating movement of the piston could be translated into the rotary motion of a flywheel, which in turn could be connected through gears to the wheels of the wagon. Thus the device could now be self-propelled. (note: A schematic diagram of the entire mechanism originally accompanied this proposal, but has since disappeared, undoubtedly stolen by spies eager to get the jump on its commercial applications.) Of course, increasing the size of the boiler also necessitated an increase in the size of the wagon used to house the assembly, as well as requiring a smaller wagon to be pulled along behind, loaded with coal. In the interest of technical progress, however, these changes are seen as minor annoyances.

INVENTIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE OF
HIGH SAFETY- DEFENSE DIVISION.

WHOOPS'S WAR STEED

This gnomish invention is a set of machinery and armor attached to a warhorse. Whoops's War Steed was invented by Whoops (his abbreviated name), for a Solamnic Knight friend of his. The Knight, of course, denies requesting or participating in its creation. Invented early in the Age of Might, the Solamnics stopped supplying horses to Whoops after the quite spectacular death of the third horse.

The bulk of the machinery (gears, pipes, valves, etc.) sit upon the fore of the horses back, right in front of the saddle. Four chains extend down from the gears, attached by leather straps to the bottom of the horses legs. As the horse walks, it powers the machinery.

The main function of the gears is to power the huge fan blades on either side of the horse. These three bladed wheels spin about as the horse moves, their speed congruent to the horses own. The function of these blades is to deflect missile fire, cutting to ribbons anyone attempting flank melee, and to cool off the horse and rider. Attached to the front of the machinery is a device that resembles the cross between a gnome Belcher and Blunderbuss. When fired, the cannon spits the ammunition in a parabola over the rider and horse's heads (hopefully). Mounted on both sides of the horse are two lances (or footman dragonlances if applicable) extending far in front of the horse for charging and impaling attacks. The waste material of all this machinery is collected in a box-shaped cache behind the rider's saddle. Upon activation, this box ejects the material behind the horse, creating an effective slippery diversion to any pursuers behind the War Steed. Attached to the top of the waste catch is an aerodynamically designed metal pole, raising up about five feet. This can masquerade as a war banner pole, but of course is has a different function. When activated, an umbrella made of cloth expands from the top of the pole. This is to protect the rider and horse from rain, sun, boiling oil, overhead missile weapons, and hopefully dragon breath (this, of course, doesn't stop dragon breath).

DUELING BODY

Observing the dueling practices among the Knights of Solamnia on Sancrist and the cavaliers from the Northern Ergothian nobility, a team of tinker gnomes from the Military Machinery Guild of Mount Nevermind noted the need for trustworthy seconds, and set out to design a mechanized and reliable spring-powered helper for the formalized and rigid duels.

MARK I

A wheeled platform deploys a long arm to slap the face of the challenged duelist with a glove, then to obtain the selected weapon from a set of shelves in an attached cart and present the weapon to the duelist. Problem: Sometimes the arm reaches into the weapons compartment instead of the glove compart-

ment and causes an unwanted result when a duelist goes down before the duel has started.

MARK II

The arsenal is now stored in an easily accessible stand instead of in separate compartments for short, long, and extra long weapons. An added blunderbuss is mounted and triggered to signal the start of the duel. Problem: The shaking of the wagon frequently knocks the blunderbuss out of position, causing the discharge to go off in an disadvantageous direction.

MARK III

The stand is converted to separate arms, one for every type of weapon. Appliance for inclusion of Dragonlances vetoed by the Knightly Council. The blunderbuss is replaced by a great gong. Problems: Duelists find the gong sound more infuriating than each other. The arms start slashing during the initialization phase, making it difficult to find volunteers who will wind up the machine.

MARK IV

For the time being the final version marks a revolution in dueling traditions. The gong size is reduced and placed on a separate, smaller secondary unit. The truly ingenious invention is the remote controlling of the weapon arms by wires from a control board, where a certified Guild member operates switches and levers in order to let the machine itself perform the actual dueling! To ensure fairness, each duelist must naturally have his own machine. In addition to greatly diminishing the lethality of duels, this in effect makes the duelists themselves superfluous. Problem: None discovered, as nobody has yet expressed interest in using a machine the size of a large wagon to represent themselves in a duel. Draft and documentation sent to the Committee for Public Relations and Promotion.

INVENTION FROM THE COMMITTEE OF SPECIAL NEW PROJECTS- BUREAUCRATIC DIVISION

GREAT GNOMISH MACHINE

Carefully observing the workings of elves for many years has shown their lifestyle to be one of "harmony with their environment." They comfortably live within the workings of their surroundings, seeds grow into trees, trees drop fruit, which in turn have seeds, starting the cycle again. There are many other examples like this one, but what this really shows is that the elves see themselves as pieces in a cycle, and cycles are parts of machines, and machines, of course, are the most beautiful things in the world.

The first part of this patent is a proposal for a reorganization and restructuring of our entire society based on the workings of a giant machine in which we all play a very small part, though some of us will play smaller parts than others. Together, these small parts can create truly great things. The second part of this patent is a means with which to enable the parts, without digging through old files or folders or whatever else, to easily, concisely, and most importantly, accurately transcribe information that may be openly shared amongst all the parts, small or smaller.

Let me first describe the way things work now. Someone has an idea. He goes to someone else with the idea. That someone else goes to another someone else, who turns to the first someone and asks something like, "We need to ask another someone if we can do this." By that time, the second someone realizes it's time for lunch and goes off, leaving the rest of the someones holding the proverbial bag. Lunchtime now over, the second someone returns to find the first group of someones gone and a little note behind saying, "Gone off to find someone else to take your place." But this particular someone really liked the initial idea, so he goes off and gathers his own group of someones, which in turn run across the first group of someones who are naturally very cross with the whole situation. Chaos ensues. Everyone grabs for everyone's supplies, clenched fists, angry voices, shouts of

"unfair!" and "is there no equality?" Our comrades have seen this many times.

All this is eliminated with the implementation of my patent. Taking a cue from the elves, everyone will become part of a Great Gnomish Machine. At the center of the machine are the Great Gears, who determine which ideas should be put to test in the field, and which require the gathering of more information before valuable time and resources are allocated to their conception. The "teeth" of these Great Gears mesh with the Lesser Gears, who are the advisors and other staff of the Great Gears.

Naturally, there are more Lesser Gears than Great Gears. In turn, each of the Lesser Gears have a staff of their own, who have their own staff, until everyone is part of somebody's staff, each assigned a specific task that they do best. With everyone doing what they do best, all proposals approved by the Great Gears will be implemented with the greatest efficiency possible. Nobody would have to leave their benches except for lunch and could work without ever having contact with anyone who is not a superior gear. In fact, with just a little incentive, nobody would ever have to leave their work, they could just eat at their benches, nor even have need to talk to another person! Everyone working, everyone happy, everything perfectly efficient. What more could be asked of a machine?

Obviously, this is not a patent for a physical thing, but a radical new kind of thing, a property of the intellect, in short, an intellectual property. Whatever the ramifications of an intellectual property in terms of patents and ownership and other hobgoblins of the law may be, I'm sure they all will be easy enough to work through.

TAPER

The taper is the catalyst to put the Great Gnomish Machine into action. Combining a number of public domain patents, including the "Weight Reduction Farm," the "Red Dye Brewery, No. 4," and the "Typewriter" (a rather silly idea which never took off), the taper transcribes written information via a series of hammers onto the bodies of long tapeworms from the Weight Reduction Farm. To distinguish the tapeworms from the Farm's normal tapeworms, they are

dyed red. This "red tapeworm," or "red tape" for short, is the universal, regulated format by which each of the gears communicates with the others.

No other form of communication will be accepted by any gear, from the lowest to the Great, to ensure all orders are carried out in a manner everyone understands and accepts. There will be no chance of miscommunication, nor misinformation, since red tape will be accessible, inalterable, and the final word in all things.

A FINAL WORD

Normally, all patents have cautionary notes attached to them threatening the most ridiculous menaces. However, this dual patent for the Great Gnomish Machine and the Taper are without danger of any kind, and no one should in any way feel threatened by their conception or their implementation.

COMMITTEE OF HOUSING PROTECTION- ANTI-KENDER DIVISION

To: Committee on Devices and Machines
From: Failsafe, Division of Housing Protection
Date: 3rd of Winter Night (Newkolt), 380 AC
Subject: New Anti-Kender Door prototype (condensed version)

The prototype for the Anti-Kender Door was completed yesterday, only a few weeks behind schedule. The door has multiple locks upon the inside, eight to be exact, and when one is tripped from the outside, it triggers a secondary set of seventeen locks internally, keeping the kender busy for quite some time in attempting to unlock them all. Also, when one lock is opened from the outside without the proper key, a chime will sound, alerting all nearby to the intruder.

We will begin testing the door as soon as our volunteer kender arrive at Mt. Nevermind.

To: Committee on Devices and Machines
From: Failsafe, Division of Housing Protection
Date: 18th of Spring Blossom (Fleurgreen), 380 AC
Subject: Prototype testing of Anti-Kender Door is complete (condensed version)

The tests conducted upon the Anti-Kender Door have yielded surprising results. The locks work as expected, the secondary set going off and doubly locking the door as one is tripped. However, the chime that sounds won't stop once started. Many long nights were spent on the problem of the chime, which we think we will have figured out for our second prototype.

Second, quite often the kender would avoid the door and go straight for a first floor window upon seeing the number of locks on the door.

Therefore, we are requesting permission to continue our Anti-Kender Door project and begin an Anti-Kender Window division to commence as soon as possible.

COMMITTEE OF CULINARY EXPEDITION- BAKING DIVISION

A GNOME PATENT APPLICATION FOR AN AUTOMATED APPLE PEELER AND CORER

Gone forever is the drudgery of preparing apples by hand, thanks to this wonderful new labor saving device. Simply spit an apple on the two coring tines, fire up the boiler, climb into the operator's saddle and engage the control levers.

The twin coring tines hold the apple in place while a mechanical arm wielding a paring knife revolves at high speed around the motionless apple, trimming away the peel. The attitude of this second arm is controlled by the operator by means of several levers which adjust the blade's position relative to the apple. In trial runs, first-time operators usually acquired the necessary skill to successfully manipulate the blade after only a couple of bushels of practice apples. Once the peel has been trimmed away, a third arm is then directed to hold the apple while the coring tines are maneuvered in a circular motion to extract the core. This, requires a degree of skill on the part of the operator, but is usually learned in somewhat less time than the peeling. Finally, a fourth arm can be engaged if desired, which slices the peeled and cored apple over an awaiting pie.

Certain aspects of the device have received advance public attention and need to be addressed. Malicious rumors have suggested that the device has led to the

baking of dozens of pies filled only with apple cores. However, the members of the design committee assure their fellow gnomes that these accusations are highly exaggerated—only a few such pies were actually prepared, and those were due entirely to the inexperience of the operator. Almost none of these pies were sold for public consumption. The regrettable peeling and coring of one member of the design committee (to whose memory this application is hereby dedicated) has since led to the adoption of certain safety features, most notable is the deadman's switch on the gear train that operates the mechanical arms. This switch prevents the gear train from being engaged when the operator is not actively seated in the saddle and working the levers to control the arms. The addition of this switch should substantially reduce the risk to the operator while he is out of the saddle, spitting an apple on the tines.

Another safety feature is a clear glass visor mounted in front of the operator to protect his eyes from the constant spray of apple juice, pulp, and flecks of peel. This debris tends to accumulate on the shield, obscuring the operator's vision so a fifth arm has been added to the mechanism to continually wipe the shield clean while the device is in operation. A large apron and frequent baths are recommended.

For those interested in acquiring one of these marvelous inventions, suitable placement in the home must be considered. A room dedicated strictly to housing the device should be selected near the kitchen. The kitchen itself obviously cannot be used because of the size of the device, unless one wishes the kitchen to be devoted entirely to the preparation of apples (which is an option). This room therefore needs to be large enough to house the boiler, a coal supply, the steam piston, the gear box, the operator's saddle and accompanying control levers, and the various arms of the mechanism itself. In all, a modest sized room about the dimensions of the average temple or guild hall should be adequate.

In the hands of an accomplished operator, this device can handle upwards of half a dozen apples a day, making it the perfect appliance for any cook.



DRAGONFIRE
OR, ASK A STUPID QUEST . . .

I. THE EPIC ARGUMENT

By her I bided day by day,
Full of a love I dared not say,
Awestruck, I waited, lost and weak,
Nearly too terrified to speak,
Sorrowing, as I sighed for her,
Frozen by weakness—there we were,
I in the frailty of my heart,
She in her thoughts, alone, apart.

Finally, once she took my hand,
Only to say, "Please understand;
Love at a loss should never be
Stranded as we are. Go from me,
Seeking the courage hearts know best,
Showing it all at my request;
Search for what lovers all require:
Return to me with dragonfire."

2. PREPARATION AND PRAYER

Sighing, she left. Her steps were slow,
Waiting for things I might not know.
Homeward I went, not looking back;
All through the night I filled a pack,
Stocking a bag of cleric's tomes,
Chalices, charms and palindromes,
Weapons of wonder and of war,
Sorcerers' scrolls and kenderlore.

Sunrise I stood beside my bed,
My rucksack high above my head.
Forward I strode, my bed unmade,
Walking the road ahead, I prayed:
"Grant me the cunning of a gnome,
Cold of an elven catacomb.
Courage of knights, and so inspire
My quest to bring her dragonfire."

3. THE SEARCH FOR GUIDANCE

Ready for doom, I shared my quest,
Full of the one whom I loved best,
Telling a shepherd all.
He laughed
And wiped his eyes and said, "Ye're daft.
What do you want with all that gear?

Planning on being gone a year?"
I said, "I seek a dragon, where—"
The shepherd shrugged. "He's just up there,
Left at the lane's-end here, then straight,
Right at the spring and upper gate,
Above the pasture land a way—
I walk it every other day.
Looking for dragonfire? Then go,
Tell him that Ralphie says hello.
Half a day's hike or so, not higher,
I think you'll find your dragonfire."

4. THE QUEST, HOWEVER BRIEF

He and his kinfolk laughed at me.
Turning my face from mockery
Facing my destiny, unsure,
Heedless of toil and sheep manure,
Scaling the slopes alone, unknissed,
Facing the mountains and the mist,
I climbed the ramparts, not to tire
Till I discovered dragonfire.

5. THE HERO'S REQUEST

Labor and sunset saw me stand
Over the highest pasture land,
Near where a dark and yawning cave
Gaped like a hero's fresh-dug grave.
Nothing at all that I could see,
scanning the dragon-made debris
Would challenge hearts and so inspire
Some proof of love from dragonfire.
Looming above me suddenly,
Awesome, he stood regarding me,
Saying in tones of worldly woe,
"Please tell me you're a peddler. —No?"
I stood before him there and said,
"I love a woman. I aspire
To take for mine your dragonfire."

6. THE SUPERNATURAL RESPONSE

His answer came abrupt and clear:
"Young man, did Ralphie send you here?"
I nodded, mute. The dragon, wise,
Looking at me through golden eyes,
Answered my challenge, all intent:
"But this is hardly what she meant—"
Turning aside his deadly breath,
"—A lover wouldn't seek your death.
Sleep until sunrise, then go down,
Back to your love who used to frown;

Dream of her smiling, through this night,
Dream of her under candle light,
Dream of her in a moonlit glade,
Dream of her dancing, unafraid.
Dream of her wet with dreams and dew,
Dream of her as she dreams of you.
Dream of her as your heart's desire,
And you will find your dragonfire."

7. THE REVELATION, AND THE END OF THE QUEST

I dreamed of her. I dreamed her dress:
Satin to lace, to less and less,
And then to smiles.
My dream was good,
And when I woke, I understood.
Up in the dawn I leapt and sprang,
Running downhill, I wept and sang
Til I was home, and there I fell,
Right at the door I knew so well,
Opening arms, and bended knee.
To my delight, she ran to me.

We met embracing, lips on lips,
All-tracing eyes and fingertips,
Both of us yielding in attack,
Cloaked in a night discreetly black.
Hearts are the oven of desire

THE OLD BARKEEP

BARKEEP'S ADVICE

(chorus)

Drink once, and if you drink twice
Please heed an old barkeep's advice

1. Just after you've finished a flagon,
Don't bet you can harness a dragon,
It will take it amiss
And probably hiss
And will surely demolish the wagon.

(chorus)

2. If bottles of wine make you tender
Do not try to cuddle a kender,
For you'll lose all your gold,
And also I'm told
It is hard to distinguish their gender.

(chorus)

3. After drinking a glass of the foam,
Do not buy machines from a gnome,
For the levers and gears
Could drive you to tears
And just trust me—don't try this at home.

(chorus)

4. When you're downing a grog on the wharf
Refrain, sir, from drowning a dwarf,
He will shout and resist
And brandish his fist
And make sure that your features all morph.

Drink once, and if you drink twice
Please heed an old barkeep's advice.



THE DEATH OF STURM

PRYDERI OF ABANASINIA,

known as the Bard of Ansalon

A knight of noble bearing, stood on battlements gray,
ever forward staring, awaiting his fate this day.
An ancient sword and ancient mail, heirlooms of a father lost,
to succeed and not to fail, but what would be the cost?
To live and to die, for a knighthood falling,
look to the clouds where dragons fly, death is ever calling.



Alone stood the knight, and on came a dragon blue,
he stayed to fight, and for his death he knew.
A dragon's loud shrill cry, his rider calm and steady,
down they charged from the sky, at the knight standing ready.
His sword swung low, but his foe did not relent,
and the spear struck a blow, that through his body went.
An elf maiden's grief, like clouds o'er the sun,
a sadness that will not be brief, and sorrow that will never be done.



The highlord speaks, and the elf stands still,
the dragon shrieks, but does not kill.
As Evil flies away, the elf holds the spear,
that killed the knight this day, that killed one so dear.
More gaping is the wound, left by words of hate,
she finds her heart is doomed, that Fle is lost to fate.



She stands on battlements gray, in the chill of winter night,
sorrowed by that day, saddened by her plight.
Falling down her cheek, drops a single tear,
the cold wind creaks, and blows away her fear.
Like ice in summer's light, like dragons of a winter night.





SUBMITTED BY LYRALARANASA,

Apprentice to Master Scholar Rekabyral

Against a backdrop of swirled green and brown, a group of leather-clad hunters stalk their prey. The figures flit across the stage in a dance of pursuit that the horned deer comically eludes. The children laugh, and their parents smile at the animal's antics. This story is known to them.

Then, with a snap that sounds like a bone breaking, a story generations old is changed. A new backdrop tumbles into view. Painted in angry shades of red and orange, brown and ragged at the edges, it looks like it is on fire. Before the crowd has time to do more than gasp in shock, another backdrop comes into view, moving much more slowly than the exploding red one. This background is white—sparkling, blinding white. As it slowly unfurls, it pushes the hunters and prey ahead of it, obliterating them. It seems almost anticlimactic. There is no great battle, no struggle, just the field of white, emptying the stage. For a moment, the crowd is struck silent.

Though the audience knows what comes next, a collective moan rises as the final figure in the play makes its entrance. In a fluid movement, the elegant beast undulates out of the darkness at the edges of the stage, slithering across the backdrop. It is a great dragon, so white it would be lost against the pale backdrop but for its highlights of silver and blue. Its eyes are frosty green, its head a blunt, scaly wedge. It spreads leathery white wings that span the width of the stage, and roars in silent victory as it surveys its frozen domain.

The expressiveness of the dragon's gestures is astonishing, considering that it is merely a puppet, made of hide and cane. Even more remarkable is that this creature, a representation of the great dragon Gellidus the White, has become the new ending to a story generations old. A story that, in the history of the Dallengesh tribe of the Kagonesti, has never changed—until now.

The Kagonesti elves, also called the Wild Elves, believe that their roots as a people date to the very beginning of time, with the creation of the world. Their legends have been passed down from generation to generation, and the Dallengesh boast an especially colorful tale of their origins. According to their legends, the Kagonesti were given the gift of puppetry by the gods during the awakening of the world. The elves who would become the Silvanesti and the Qualinesti moved east, intent on making their place in the world, but those who would become the Kagonesti had no such desire. They stayed on the forests of Ergoth, living in harmony with nature, happy with their simple lives. During this time, it is said, the Dallengesh adopted the art of puppetry and refined it. For the other tribes, it was entertainment, frivolous storytelling; for the Dallengesh, it was art and history.

The changes in the outside world did not affect the elves of Ergoth, not even the rise and fall of the Kingpriest of Istar made a difference in their simple lives. Yet the wheels of time turned and eventually caught up with the Kagonesti and the Dallengesh. Their Silvanesti and Kagonesti brethren returned, refugees from the War of the Lance, and subjugated their wild cousins as slaves and servants. Families were

separated, pristine forests destroyed. But even this did not alter the myths and legends of the elves, as told by the Dallengesh puppets.

Although puppetry is not limited to the elfen races, the elves believe that puppetry was their unique gift from the gods. Certainly puppetry among the Dallengesh is an ancient tradition, flourishing since the Age of Dreams. The elf bard Quivalin Soth makes mention of a sutradhara, a holder of strings, in one of his many ballads of the time.

Most of the races upon the face of Krynn have some form of puppetry—from the jerky, smoking, mechanized, metal box puppets of the gnomes to the elegant water puppets of the Dargonesti. Mosaics that appeared to be faded representations of puppets were supposedly found in the ruined and abandoned cities of the Irda. The puppetry of the minotaurs is thought to date back to the founding of Mithandrus in approximately 2700pc. The wizards of old entertained audiences with rows of magical dancing puppets formed in the images of the gods of magic.

Puppetry was an established mode of storytelling in the doomed city of Istar, well before the Cataclysm. Historians have found references to puppetry in writings salvaged from the ruins. These references point to the use of rod and block puppets, but nothing is known of the nature of the performances. When the Cataclysm came to end, the great circuses of the time fell into disuse and the entertainers were dispersed to all points of the continent. Among them were puppeteers who then roamed over Ansalon with their shows.

Historically, the puppeteers of the Kagonesti have been very proud of their art and prefer to keep their methods a secret. Each tribe had its own tradition, and they strive to keep the other tribes from knowing how they build and operate their puppets. Traditions have been passed from father to son; daughters are not taught the art because they might marry outside the tribe and give away puppet secrets. Today, even among the steadfast Dallengesh, the techniques are handed down from parent to child, male and female, and the Kagonesti can tell the tribal origin of a tale, just from the design of the puppets and the way the puppeteer moves them.



While the stories enacted amongst the other races and even among other tribes of the Kagonesti have varied with the passing of the ages, those of the Dallenesh have not. Though the telling may vary from family to family, the Dallenesh believe the tales themselves date from the time when they lived in their isolated forest homes during the Age of Dreams. The stories are drawn from legends and myths, and some historians believe the puppet tales are more reliable than the versions of the elven bards, because no Dallenesh would dare alter the telling for art's sake or to ease the difficulty of the performance.

One of the best known contemporary puppeteers is Amariah, a talented Dallenesh whose grandfather was the famous balladeer and puppeteer, Karaghiosis. Amariah's performances are especially popular because of the depth of emotion and the subtlety of mood she conveys with her puppets. While most puppeteers rely on stylized gestures, Amariah favors a minimalist technique. Rather than trying to reproduce the great variety of human movement, a near impossibility with the stiff, two dimensional puppets, Amariah works with a sparseness and elegance that deliberately leaves aspects of the tale open to interpretation. Yet her audiences happily imagine the puppets to be doing the most marvelous and magi-

cal of things.

"My grandfather began teaching me his art when I was only a child," Amariah says. "He gave me a leaf attached to a string, and only when I had mastered movement with this was I given a second string. A season passed before I was given a rod for my leaf puppet."

The puppeteer is a combination of artist, teacher and bard. The Kagonesti puppeteer creates puppets from a unique combination of leather and thick barks, molding these materials with needlework, mud and paint into the flat, rod and string controlled puppets. The puppets frequently have painted faces and jointed bodies, although some are simpler. The most ancient models are made of intricately pierced deer or goatskin, treated so that it is translucent, colored with vegetable dyes and then held together by split cane.

The controls for operating the puppets vary, from a single loop of string, one end of which is attached to the puppet's head, the other to the simple body, to a complex mechanism of strings and rods, such as those that drive the great dragon puppet and require at least three puppeteers. The Dallenesh puppet figures are all relatively small, only one to two feet high, and are easily stored and transported, as might be expected amongst a nomad race.

Unlike the true shadow puppets of the Silvanesti,

the Kagonesti audiences witness both the puppet body, and in the background, the dancing shadows aping the figure's movements. Kagonesti puppet plays are usually performed just after sundown every night during the winter. Daytime shows, though rare, use only the puppet figures themselves, eschewing the dramatic background shadows, and this sun-dappled tradition is known as Lemahesh. Lemahesh is more likely to be performed in the spring or fall, and only then in times of great plenty, when the tribes have time to spare for frivolity.

A backdrop is normally made out of a sheet of cloth or leather, although just as often, the Kagonesti may find their entertainment being played out against a boulder or bluff. When the more formal backdrop is used, it is stretched between two trees, or between two vertical poles stuck in the ground. These poles are sometimes part of a platform built specially for the event, but more often, the earth itself is the stage upon which the puppeteers perform.

The maneuvering of the puppets requires such superior skill that it take a puppeteer more than ten years to become a master of the art. A young puppeteer starts his or her career literally working from the bottom up—learning, first, to operate the puppet's legs. The apprentice's first major challenge is to learn how to create the illusion of lower body movements.

The next step is to learn how to move the puppet's hands. Many of the classical puppet characters require only one elf to bring them to life. On stage, in order not to detract from the puppets, the puppeteers themselves are smeared with mud and vegetable dyes so they blend into the backdrop. Gone are the traditional intricate markings that cover the hands and faces of the wild elves, replaced by the simpler swirls of green and brown to emulate the flora of a forest. Even a puppet master, who has performed for decades, knows the limelight is not for him, but for his puppets.

The story lines are provided by puppet movement and occasional sound effects. Rarely, and only then for special occasions such as weddings or birth ceremonies or holidays, do string instrument players provide background music. The tales are so well-known,

so much a part of the race's culture, that narration is truly unnecessary. Kagonesti children learn the tales from the cradle.

The Kagonesti plays performed today are those, therefore, that have survived for generations. The classics vary, from plays which pay homage to the Gods of Light, to vignettes of a bountiful hunt, to celebration of a 'joining' or birth, to ancient stories which map the early heritage of the race, to simple "lesson-tales" about daily living. It is the last two which demonstrate the changes wrought by recent upheavals in world of Krynn.

The story just enacted is a time honored one: a group of hunters vanquishing playful prey. But the folk tale has been dramatically altered with the addition of an important new character: the great dragon, Gellidus, also called Frost. In this way the Dallenesh take stock of the tremendous changes sweeping the land and incorporate recent events and history into the ancient, evolving tradition.



BY TIKI WAYLAN MAJERE

Proprietress, Inn of the Last Home

Necessity being the mother of invention, many interesting culinary creations have come out of the War of the Lance. Most of the recipes included in this collection were the mainstays of army chefs making do with whatever was at hand. Some have their origins in kender and elven entrees, both races being renowned for cooking out of doors. From pancakes fried on shields to gingerbreads baked in portable iron ovens, the following dishes are as mouth watering served in a warm kitchen as they were when they were doled out on the battlefield to starving troops and hungry officers.



GREEN ONION PANCAKES

The dragonarmy advance came to a standstill on the Solamnic Plains in 351AC as it struggled to maintain supply lines to its forces. In addition Solamnic saboteurs were highly successful at destroying or raiding ration wagons. At such times the dragonarmy infantry fought off hunger with flat cakes made from confiscated wheat flour and such seasonings as could be found in the field. The cakes were fried over fires in pans or shields.

- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1/2 cup boiling water plus a little cold water
- 1 scallion (finely chopped)
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp vegetable oil
- 1 tsp peanut oil (for skillet)

In a bowl stir together flour and boiling water. Cover and let rest 3 minutes. Add 1 tbs more cold water if necessary to make dough less crumbly. Knead gently a few turns. Let rest 15 minutes. Divide dough into three balls. Roll dough balls into very thin flat disks about 8 inches in diameter. Rub each disk with a portion of the vegetable oil, sprinkle with generous pinch of salt and a third of chopped scallion. Roll each disk into a tube. Roll each tube into a snail-shell shape. Reroll the dough into 7 inch disks about 1/8 inch thick. (Don't worry about splits in the dough.) Heat 1/2 tsp peanut oil in skillet over medium high heat, fry cakes one at a time on both sides about 5 minutes a side until golden brown. Add 1/4 tsp fresh peanut oil for each new cake. Serve hot. Salt to taste.

KENDER WILD MUSHROOM RAGOUT

- 1 cup thinly sliced white onions
- 2 pounds fresh, wild mushrooms
- 1 tbs minced garlic
- 1/4 cup butter
- 2 tsp fresh chopped thyme
- 1 1/2 tsp fresh minced rosemary
- 1/4 cup stock (chicken, mushroom, or vegetable)
- 3 tbs dry sherry
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 2 tbs brandy (optional)
- 3 tbs fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp fresh ground black pepper
- 2 tbs fresh chopped parsley
- 6 oz. cooked egg noodles

Melt butter in a large skillet over medium high heat. Saute onions, mushrooms, and garlic in butter until tender. Add herbs, stock, and sherry. Simmer until liquid is reduced by half. Add cream and simmer until slightly thickened. Add brandy (Otik's finest!) and lemon juice. Simmer 2 more minutes. Add salt, pepper, parsley, and serve over the noodles.

DRAGONBLASTED STEAK

Left to their own devices when the dragonarmy food supply lines were disrupted, draconians were apt to eat any dead flesh left on the battlefield, the most edible of which were cattle. They were especially fond of cattle who had been attacked by a fire-breathing red dragon, for these were already nicely cooked and, the draconians claimed, had a unique flavor which this recipe attempts to emulate. A serving of rice helps cut the tang of this dish.

- 4 tbs soy sauce
- 1 tbs oyster sauce
- 4 tbs Worcestershire sauce
- 1 dash ground black pepper
- 1 dash garlic powder
- 2 dashes Italian seasoning
- 4 green onions (finely chopped)
- 2 tsp peanut oil
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 steak (any cut you prefer)
- 1 cup steamed rice

In a shallow bowl, blend soy sauce and Worcestershire sauce together. Add oyster sauce, black pepper, garlic powder, and Italian seasoning to the mixture. Marinate steak in mixture for 1 hour (or longer for meat left on battlefield more than a day). Reserve marinade. Add oil to a frying pan or the shield or breast plate of a dead Solamnic knight. Heat oil in pan over fire. (Pyromancer sorcerers are to reserve their skills for the battle). Fry the steak evenly on both sides. Draconians prefer to simply sear the flesh on the outside. Humans might prefer to cook the meat longer. Remove steak from the pan to the bed of rice. Add marinade, green onions, and water to the cooking pan. Simmer until green onions have browned and marinade is a dark brown paste. Pour paste over steak. Serve hot.



BEAN DIP

This dish comes to us from the gnomes, but the process by which they shell the peas, mash them, squeeze the lemons, mince the garlic, and chop the parsley is simply too horrific to describe and far too dangerous to try at home. Suffice it to say most human chefs can easily accomplish the task given some patience, dextrous fingers, and a food processor. Steam power is not required.

- 2 16 oz. cans chick peas
(also called garbanzo beans)
- 1/2 cup sesame tahini
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 2 large cloves garlic, crushed and minced
- olive oil
- chopped parsley
- warm pita bread
- fresh vegetables cut into shapes suitable for dipping

Open the first can of peas, reserving the liquid. Set the liquid aside. Open and drain second can. Peel thin, transparent shells from peas. Process peas in food processor. Blend in the sesame tahini, lemon juice, and garlic. Thin mixture gradually with reserved liquid from can of peas and blend until smooth. Pour dip into a serving dish, drizzle with olive oil, and garnish with parsley. Dip can be served with pita bread, cucumbers, tomatoes, green and red peppers, black olives, and radishes. Serves 4-6. Store dip with oil covering surface to keep it from getting crusty.

HERB N' CHEESE COATING

A mainstay of traveling chefs even before the war, this seasoning mix can be used to flavor any number of vegetable and meat dishes.

- 1/2 cup unseasoned bread crumbs
- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese
(or mix of Parmesan and Romano)
- 1 tbs garlic powder (or to taste)
- 1 tsp dried rosemary
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 tsp dried marjoram
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 heaping tsp chives or dried onions

Stir together all ingredients and store in an air-tight container. It will keep up to three months. Use as desired on chicken, pork, potatoes, etc.

HERB N' CHEESE POTATOES

- 10-15 new red skin potatoes
- 1/2 to 3/4 cup Herb n' Cheese Coating

Wash potatoes and remove eyes and any green spots. Cut into bite-sized pieces. Boil until almost tender, 5-10 minutes. Drain in colander. While potatoes are still moist coat cut sides thoroughly with mixture and arrange on a cooking sheet or iron skillet. Bake at 350°F for 10-15 minutes, or until coating turns slightly brown. Serves 4.

PESTO PASTA AND PEAS

This dish comes from the Vingaard River basin. The surrounding Solamnic Plains provided the wheat for the pasta and the green vegetables, and the herb basil thrived in the more temperate river valley.

- 2 cups fresh basil leaves
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbs pine nuts, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tbs grated Romano cheese
- 3 tbs softened butter
- 8 oz. pasta (shells, penné, or spirals)
- 8 oz. fresh snap peas, snow peas, or green beans

Mince basil leaves. If mincing is done more than a few hours ahead of serving, leaves must be blanched in boiling water for 5-10 seconds—this will preserve their green color and sweet flavor. Blend together basil, oil, nuts, garlic, cheeses, and butter. Pour pasta in boiling water. 4-5 minutes before pasta is done (according to package directions) add green vegetable. When pasta and vegetables are tender (but not soft), drain away water. Transfer pasta and vegetables to a large bowl, coat with basil and cheese mixture. Serve hot or cold. Serves 4.

KENDER FRIED RICE

- thinly sliced fresh vegetables, onions, peppers, water chestnuts, bean sprouts,
- 1 lb beef, chicken, or pork sliced in strips (or all)
- 2 tbs peanut oil
- 1/4 cup soy sauce (or to taste)
- 3-4 cups cooked rice

In a large skillet heat oil until hot but not smoking. Add vegetables and beef or chicken or pork (or, as the kender do, add all of them). Stir until the meat is cooked through. Add 3 or 4 cups (depending on the size of the skillet) of cooked rice. Add soy sauce and stir until everything is hot. (If you smell smoke, you overdid it.) Serves many kender or 4-6 big people.

LORD ARIAKAS'S BEEF AND BROCCOLI
(UNDER FIELD CONDITIONS)

The Red Watch Sivaks, Highlord Ariakas's main bodyguard, performed duties beyond protecting their master in the field of battle. Red Watch Officer Zagnak, a sivak whose meticulous, cold-blooded personality would have made Astinus seem warm-hearted, served as Ariakas's chef. Zagnak's brother Tarmak the Insane, who learned his unparalleled thieving skills from kender with whom he'd been imprisoned, served as Zagnak's assistant. What follows is one of Zagnak's blander recipes, spiced up with suggestions in italics from his brother.

Zagnak's Ingredients

- 1/4 pound rump roast of beef, venison, or other game or poultry in a pinch
- 1 bundle broccoli (about 8 oz.)
- 3 tbs soy sauce

- 3 tsp peanut oil
- 1 tsp corn starch
- 1/4 cup water or red wine

(Tarmak's optional ingredients: fish sauce, Worcestershire sauce, oyster sauce, snow peas, thinly sliced carrots, baby ears of corn, mushrooms (not poisonous ones, unless you mean to), thinly sliced onions, minced garlic, dwarf spirits.)

Cut meat into thin slices. (Thin slices cook faster than big chunks, according to Zagnak.) Marinate meat in soy sauce for 15 minutes. Stab at Tarmak's hand with knife to prevent him from seasoning meat. (My brother means fish sauce, which I got from the minotaurs, though it doesn't smell like any fish I know. Anyway, the fish sauce tastes great. Or Zagnak could mean Worcestershire sauce, which Lord Ariakas did once say he liked, or once I sneaked in some oyster sauce stolen from the Dimernesti or Dargonesti—who are mammals not fish, according to Zagnak, though why you would want to still breathe air when you're in the water. . . Fortunately, when I added the oyster sauce Zagnak didn't cut me too deep with his knife—which he always keeps really sharp.) Meanwhile wash broccoli, break crown into small flowerets and slice stems diagonally into thin pieces. Heat 2 tsp peanut oil in frying pan until it just begins to smoke, add meat. Cook meat at high heat for 5-10 minutes. Set meat aside. Stab Tarmak's hand before he snatches a piece of Lord Ariakas's dinner. (Too late, already got a piece.) Heat remaining tsp of peanut oil in sauce pan. Sauté broccoli at medium high heat for 5 minutes. Wave knife at Tarmak before he adds other vegetables. (I like to throw in other vegetables if they can be found, peas, corn, onion, garlic, carrots—though they're impossible to get on the Plains of Dust, but Zagnak complains that he has to cook the dish longer.) Be especially watchful of Tarmak's attempts to poison dish. (My brother means mushrooms. Funny how hard it is to tell poisonous mushrooms that will kill a man in ten minutes from the safe kind. Fortunately, Zagnak caught my mistake before Lord Ariakas took a bite. Lord Ariakas did not have us executed. Zagnak had to make a fresh dish from an old chicken.) If Tarmak adds extra vegetables, cook 5 minutes more. Make sure water is really water and not dwarf spirits from Tarmak's water skin. (Sometimes Zagnak adds wine instead of water and sips out of the wine flask, but occasionally

Lord Ariakas needs something a little stronger than wine in his food to buck him up when he's losing. I just have to be careful not to add too much so it's not soupy.) Beat water (or wine) and corn starch together, add starch mixture and meat to broccoli. Stir and heat at medium for 5 minutes. Threaten to add Tarmak's liver until he returns serving bowl filled with rice. Pour beef and broccoli over rice. Serves 1-2.

BURRFOOT BEER BREAD

This recipe comes secondhand from a kender who learned it from a friend named Ana. The bread is exceedingly simple to make and keeps for many days. It has a crunchy crust and a wholesome bite. For variety you can use a flavored ale and impart a unique taste to the bread.

- 3 cups flour
- 3 tbs sugar
- 4 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 12 oz. of beer or ale
- 1/2 tsp salt

Preheat oven to 350°F. Sift together dry ingredients. (One can substitute self-rising flour and leave out the baking powder and salt.) Shake up the beer so it's nice and fizzy and pour it into dry ingredients. (Failure to shake beer will result in tasty rocks.) Stir mixture thoroughly. Spoon batter into greased bread pan. Bake 45-50 minutes. Let bread cool 15 minutes before turning out of pan.

SANCTION'S VOLCANO SOUP

Traditionally this hot and spicy soup was made with one hot pepper. Dragon Highlord Kitiara ordered it prepared with more hot peppers. A bowl of this soup would be served to any soldier who earned her wrath. The soldier was expected to finish the soup, accompanied by no other food, and then take nightwatch.

- 1 tbs of vegetable oil
- 1 Jalapeno pepper or other kind (more, if you can handle it)
- 1/2 cup of chopped onions
- 1 10 oz. can of tomato soup
- 1 29 oz. can of chick peas
- 1 15 oz. can of red beans
- 1 10 oz. can of water (use tomato soup can)
- 1 tsp of Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp of Tabasco sauce
- cayenne pepper to taste

In a large stock pot, heat oil, add hot peppers and onions and sauté for 5 minutes. Add remaining ingredients. Stir and bring all ingredients to a fast simmer. Simmer 5 minutes more. Serves 8.

SKIE POT PIE

The Highlord Kitiara's mount, the dragon Skie, was appalled by the human tradition of cooking good meat, but he enjoyed the smell of this dish as it cooked. To assuage his disgust Varas named this meal in the dragon's honor. The recipe is versatile enough to substitute moose, partridge, venison, or other game animals for the pork, chicken, and beef used in a more domestic situation.

Pastry Dough

- 6 cups of flour
- 1 tbs salt
- 1 lb of lard or grease
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 tbs vinegar
- 1 1/4 cups cold water

In a large bowl mix the flour and salt. With a fork or pastry blender, cut in the lard until mixture resembles coarse meal. In separate bowl beat egg with vinegar and water. Pour egg mixture into flour mixture. Stir slowly with a fork until dough holds together. Press dough into disk and chill one hour while preparing filling ingredients.

Filling

- 3/4 lb pork loin, diced into 1/2 inch cubes
- 3/4 lb chicken, diced into 1/2 inch cubes
- 3/4 lb beef, diced into 1/2 inch cubes
- 2 lbs potatoes, peeled and diced into 1/2 inch cubes
- 2 large onions, chopped
- 1 1/2 tbs of salt
- 1 tbs of pepper
- water

Preheat oven to 350°F (or 250°F if planning on holding meal until battle is over) Mix the first seven filling ingredients in a large bowl. Divide the chilled

dough into thirds. Roll out two thirds of the dough. Line a large roasting pan, bottom and sides, with rolled out dough. Pour in filling. Roll out remaining dough and use to cover pie filling. Pinch sides and top of dough together. Cut a large steam vent in center of pie. Through the steam vent pour in enough water to touch the bottom of the steam vent. Bake for 1 hour at 350°F (or 7 hours at 250°F).

DRACONIAN SOUP

Varas prepared this dish at Kitiara's request as a reward for her troops. The draconians were especially fond of it.

- 2 tbs butter
- 4 medium beets, peeled and grated
- 2 tbs vinegar
- 4 tbs flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 carrots, peeled and sliced
- 1 tbs sugar
- 8 cups of meat broth
- 1 clove garlic, sliced thin
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 small head of red cabbage, shredded
- 1/2 pound of spicy sausages, cooked and sliced

In a large pot, brown the beets in the butter. Blend in the vinegar, flour, and salt. Add carrots, sugar, broth, garlic, bay leaf, and cabbage. Bring to a simmer. Simmer for 2 hours, adding water if soup becomes too stewlike. Remove the bay leaf. Add sliced sausage. Simmer until heated through. Serves 8-12.

KENDER ROLLS

Varas got this recipe from an old kender, Panutack "Tack" Bunionhide. It is a common food among the kender, who rely on its doughnutlike sweetness to give them their indefatigable energy. Varas found it particularly amusing that Kitiara would stuff her saddle bags with the little kender rolls before flying off to battle on the back of her dragon mount.

- 3/4 cup sugar.
- 1 cup finely chopped walnuts, pecans, and filberts.
- 1/4 cup warm water
- 1 package active dry yeast
- 3 cups flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup butter
- 3 eggs, slightly beaten
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1/4 cup hot milk

In a small bowl, mix 1/2 cup of the sugar with the nuts and reserve this mixture for later. In another small bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. In a large mixing bowl sift together 1 1/2 cups of the flour and salt. With a fork or pastry blender, cut in butter until the mixture resembles coarse meal. Pour in hot milk and stir quickly. Add yeast mixture, egg, vanilla, and milk. Stir until batter is smooth. Stir in the remaining flour, forming a stiff dough. Turn dough out onto a large, square, clean kitchen towel. Bring the corners together and tie the tea towel with string so it forms a bag to hold the dough. Place the cloth bag in a pan of cold water deep enough to cover the dough completely. Let dough rest about 1 hour or until the dough rises to the surface of the water.

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Turn dough out from towel into a bowl. Scoop up heaping teaspoonfuls of the dough, dredge them in the sugar and nut mixture and roll into snakes about 6 inches long and the width of a finger.

(If the dough is too sticky, dredge again in nut mixture.) Twist the dough into "S" or "U" shapes and place on a lightly greased baking sheet to rise until light, about 30 minutes. Bake at 375°F for 15 to 20 minutes, until golden brown, taking care not to blacken bottom of rolls. Yield: Approximately 3 dozen.

KITIARA'S FROSTY GAZE

On occasion Kitiara requested strong drink that wouldn't cloud her head, purportedly to keep her warm. After downing the following concoction she would mumble about the half-elf Tanis. One of her aides whispered she drank to forget, but I suspect that she used the drink as an excuse to allow herself to remember.

- 1 measure of vodka (or moonshine)
- 3 measures of lemonade
- 1/2 measure of citrus juice (orange, grapefruit, lemonade)
- 1/4 measure of sugar
- Salt to "frost" the glass edge

Pour the ingredients into a flask with some chunks of ice. Shake flask well. Wet rim of crystal goblet, dip rim in salt. Pour drink into goblet, straining out ice.

BALIFOR CLAMS AND PASTA

This heavenly dish is available to even the lowliest inhabitants around Balifor Bay, as the clams can be dug out of the beach near the water at low tide, and the ingredients are common.

- 4 oz. thin spaghetti
- 2 dozen Balifor clams, (small clams like Venus or Manila)
- 2 tbs olive oil
- 2 cloves fresh garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- black pepper to taste
- 1/4 cup fresh chopped parsley

Soak clams in fresh water while chopping garlic and parsley. Bring water to boil for spaghetti in a large pot. Saute garlic in olive oil in a separate large pot that has a lid. Add wine. Bring to a simmer. Add spaghetti to pot of boiling water, and cook until just tender. Add clams to simmering wine.

Cover pot and steam clams 5-10 minutes, until all or most of clams have opened. Discard any clams that do not open. Add pepper to taste. Drain pasta. Divide pasta, clams and wine broth between two plates. Garnish with parsley. Serve hot. Serves 2.

If anything good can be said about war, it would be that travel and trade between nations increase after it ends. Odd new fruits from the warmer climes were introduced into our cuisine, most notably the banana and the coconut.

PERRIANA'S MORNING REFRESHER

- 2 cups milk
- 1 cup blueberries or strawberries
- 1 medium banana
- 1 cup orange juice
- 1/4 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- 1/4 tsp ground cloves

The kender way: Go to the barn and coax the cow into letting you have milk. Pour milk in flask. Walk around in the woods until you find 2 handfuls of your favorite berries and drop them in the flask. Take banana from orc. (Orcs love bananas and will hoard them.) Mash banana and put goo in flask (make sure no orc goo clings to banana—in case you had to mash the orc to get the banana). Borrow a cup of juice from someone in town. Throw in 2 pinches of spices taken from mage's pouch. Cork the flask tight and run around town as if you were being chased by a dragon at least 15 minutes or until you drop. When you stop your morning refresher is ready to drink.

The easy way: Mix all ingredients in a blender or with egg beater in bowl for 1-2 minutes and pour into a glass. Serve chilled. Serves 1-2.

APRICOT COCONUT BALLS

- 8 oz. dried apricots, finely chopped
- 2 1/2 cups flaked coconut
- 2/3 cup finely chopped nuts (walnuts, hazelnuts, almonds)
- 3/4 cup sweetened condensed milk
- 1-2 cups powdered sugar

Mix first three ingredients. Add just enough of the sweetened milk to make dry ingredients stick togeth-

er. (May not need a full 3/4 cup.) Form mixture into 1 inch balls. Roll each in powdered sugar. Let stand overnight. Yield: about 4 dozen candy balls.

BROWN BEARS IN THE ORCHARD

This is an elven dish, made for celebrations in the wild.

- 1/2 cup shortening
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup molasses
- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 3/4 tsp salt
- 3/4 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp dry ground ginger
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 cup boiling water.
- 6 cups apple sauce

Prepare hot coal fire (or preheat oven to 350°F). Cream shortening with sugar until light. Beat in molasses. Sift together flour, salt, baking soda, ginger, and cinnamon. Stir into shortening mixture alternating with boiling water. Let stand while preparing portable oven. Line bottom and sides of Dutch oven with heavy parchment paper or aluminum foil. Spread apple sauce in bottom of Dutch oven. Carefully spoon gingerbread mix over applesauce, taking care not to let gingerbread sink too far into applesauce. Cover Dutch oven. Place oven in coals and cover with hot coals. Check occasionally for doneness of gingerbread and to be sure mixture is cooking evenly. (Or bake for 35-45 minutes.) When gingerbread springs back at touch, dessert is ready. Scoop out dollops of gingerbread with applesauce beneath. Serve hot, plain, or with whipped cream. Serves 4.

APRICOT COCONUT BALLS

- 8 oz. dried apricots, finely chopped
- 2 1/2 cups flaked coconut
- 2/3 cup finely chopped nuts (walnuts, hazelnuts, almonds)
- 3/4 cup sweetened condensed milk
- 1-2 cups powdered sugar

Mix first three ingredients. Add just enough of the sweetened milk to make dry ingredients stick together. (May not need a full 3/4 cup.) Form mixture into 1 inch balls. Roll each in powdered sugar. Let stand overnight. Yield: about 4 dozen candy balls.

It's a wonder there were any chickens left in Kryn timer after the war, considering all the recipes for chicken I've received. This one is named after a famous figure in elven lore. Since most elves are vegetarians, I doubt if Silvanos ate this particular dish. Thus, we are not certain where the name came from.

HERB N' CHEESE CHICKEN (OR PORK)

- 4 chicken breast halves with bones, thawed and skinned
- (or 4 extra thick pork chops)
- 1/3-1/2 cup Herb n' Cheese Coating (described earlier)

Preheat oven to 350°F. Brush meat with small amount of wine or water and coat thoroughly with herb 'n cheese mixture. Bake in baking dish until meat is cooked through 45-60 minutes depending on thickness of meat. Serves 4.

SILVANOS'S SPICY CHICKEN WRAP

- 4 chicken breasts, baked and cooled
- 3/4 cup creamy Caesar dressing
- 1 head of romaine lettuce, shredded
- 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 4 loaves pita bread or 8 flour tortillas.
- 1 lemon
- 1/2 cup of hot sauce (Tabasco) or BBQ sauce (or 1/4 cup of each)
- 2 tbs butter

Toss lettuce with dressing and 1/4 cup cheese. Cut lemon in 6 wedges. Cut chicken in strips about 1/2 inch thick and grill in butter to warm. Add juice of 2 lemon wedges and hot sauce. Stir and warm thoroughly. Warm pitas in oven. Divide the lettuce mixture among the 4 pitas, top with chicken mixture, and wrap. Garnish each pita wrap with remaining Parmesan and serve with a lemon wedge. Serves 4.

FLOTSAM CHICKEN
STUFFED WITH MUSHROOMS AND
CHEDDAR

- 1 handful of mushrooms
- splash of teriyaki sauce
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 tbs butter
- 3 chicken breasts
- 1 oz. of cheddar cheese, cut into thin slices
- 2 cups of shredded cheddar cheese
- 4 cups of milk
- 2 tbs of cornstarch
- 1/2 cup water

Preheat oven to 350°F. Sauté mushrooms in pan with butter, teriyaki sauce, and salt and pepper. Slice a lengthwise pocket in each chicken breast. Divide the sliced cheese and mushrooms into three portions and stuff into the breast pockets. Bake the chicken breasts in oven for 20 minutes.

Heat the milk and cheese on top of a double boiler, stirring constantly until melted and smooth. Mix the cornstarch thoroughly with water. Pour cornstarch slowly into milk and cheese mixture, stirring constantly. Salt and pepper to taste. Drippings from chicken pan can be stirred into cheese sauce. Pour sauce over chicken. Bake another 20 minutes. Slice across pockets and serve warm. Serves 2-4.

FESTIVAL CHICKEN

A dish created in Palanthas, served on special occasions, accompanied by a fruit compote or poached spiced pears.

- 4 1/2 chicken breasts, thawed and skinless or 4 large slices of veal
- 4 slices ham
- 4 oz. aged Swiss cheese
- Pinch sage
- freshly ground pepper to taste
- Sweet and spicy mustard
- 1/3-1/2 cup Herb n' Cheese Coating Mix (described earlier)
- Toothpicks

Preheat oven to 350°F. Pound each chicken breast flat with meat mallet. (Flatten veal more cautiously). Lay chicken with outside down on a cutting board. Brush top with a thin layer of mustard. Cover the meat with ground pepper. Lay one slice of ham on top, leaving edges sticking out. Cut cheese in 4 rectangles, sprinkle with sage, and place at the smallest end of chicken. Roll chicken and ham tightly around cheese and secure

with toothpicks. Tuck ham ends inside to prevent the cheese from melting out. Moisten outside of each chicken roll with white wine and coat with Herb n' Cheese Coating mix. Place chicken rolls in glass baking dish and bake for 20-30 minutes depending on thickness of meat. Serve hot from the oven. Serves 4.



OTHER THINGS FLINT COULD HAVE WRAPPED IN BACON

HAD HE THOUGHT ABOUT IT

1/2 pound fresh bay scallops
1 can black olives
1/2 pound bacon strips

Wrap individual scallops and olives in bacon and secure with toothpicks, or easier still, thread bacon on a skewer between olives and bay scallops. Broil on high heat until bacon is crisp on one side. Turn skewers, broil until bacon is crisp on other side. Let cool just enough to avoid burning tongue.





BY DARM WINDWHISTLE,
Scholar of Same.

Nothing, perhaps, more effectively illustrates a culture's fundamental ideologies better than its forms of artistic expression. One has only to think of the intricate stone carvings of the denizens of Thorbardin, the lush gardens of the Silvanesti and Qualinesti, or the finely wrought plate armor of the Knights of Solamnia.

Humans, for instance, are known to be fond of visually compelling artistry: painting, sculpture, pageantry, and drama. Dwarves, on the other hand, tend to prefer functionality and practicality in their art: fine architecture, ornate metal-work, and ingeniously crafted tools. Elves are often associated with more meditative, spiritual, or intellectual arts: poetry, texture gardening, and interpretive dance. With kender, however, the art most favored is music.



AN EXPLANATION OF KENDER IDEOLOGY FOR THE NON-KENDER

Upon learning of a kender's artistic preferences, the reaction of most other races is either confusion or out-and-out disbelief. After all, kender are infamous for being collectors of curiosities, baubles, trinkets, and other physical objects. This possessiveness seems not at all in keeping with the incorporeal qualities of music. How can one possess music? It is this quality of music, however, that makes it precious to a kender.

Kender view music as the ultimate expression of this communal sharing. Music may be given, but never possessed. Music may be shared and appreciated by any number of people at once, and requires cooperation between musicians.

Furthermore, music appeals to kender because it is a travelling art. A craftsman must remain in his shop with his tools; a painter must have vellum and pigment to invoke art. A musician—especially a singer—may play wherever he chooses. This transience appeals to the kender's wandering spirit as much as its ethereal quality appeals to their social lifestyle.

THE ORIGINS OF KENDER MUSIC

Music existed long before the first kender trod foot on ground. Some, like the Silvanesti sage Lemnares Thornlight, have conjectured that it was a gift of the Gods. Others, like the Palanthian scholar Adrias Dragould, maintain it is purely a product of mortals. The subject remains a heated controversy, especially since the departure of the Gods following the Second Cataclysm has brought pro-mortal sentiments into nearly every discussion.

In part, the debate still rages because of the lack of evidence to support either side. It is known that the ancient Ogre Empire revered Takhisis with long canticles. Known as *Dertrankig*, or "Offerings," several of these songs of worship have been alluded to in ancient

ogre monuments. Only the titles of these pieces remain, however, and those only because an early Elven scholar, Feldiala, noted them in her work, "On the Translation of the Irla Tongue."

The Elves, borrowing from the legacy of the Ogres, created some of the first songs for which there is physical evidence. "Silvanos and Braaklelak," a ballad of a duel between the ancient elf king and an ancient green dragon, dates from that time of the First Dragon War (circa 3400pc). Although the account is almost certainly fictional, the song remains the oldest known musical manuscript on Krynn.

It is over six hundred years from the date of that manuscript that first evidence of original kender music appears. It comes in the form of The Grey Tapestry. In 2784pc, the tapestry was presented as a gift to the kender hero Balif from the people of Silvanost. It depicted the Siege of Gargath, as well as detailed images of the creation of the "younger races" by the Graygem. The tapestry, sadly, vanished during the First Cataclysm. Only scattered accounts of it remain. However, several such accounts speak in detail of the kender portrayed in the tapestry. The most illuminating of these descriptions was written by Balif himself in a letter to a relative:

... The expressions of the [kender] are quite remarkable. The Silvanesti have managed to capture the spirit of curiosity that compels us so. At the same time, several of the kender appear to have had quite enough of the siege and have taken to playing flaternettes and tambors. I do believe they are dancing a five-step! To my surprise, I discovered that the ivy leaf border twines about the lyrics to Old Eindar's song, "The Taking of the Stone." The chorus and refrain run along the edges and meet at the corners, where kender sit playing nakers and shawms. . .

The discovery of this document dispelled two misconceptions. First, "The Taking of the Stone" was long thought to be Dwarven in origin. Instead, Balif attributes it to "Old" Eindar Fornost, a kender present at the Siege of Gargath. Second, it dated the dance known as the "Five-Step" at least a thousand years older than previously assumed.

THE KENDER TRAIL SONG

The best known kender music exists in the form of the trail song. These simple tunes span a variety of topics, from the joys of adventuring, to love songs, to the humorous and sometimes bawdy.

The trail song is thought to have originated shortly after the founding of Hylo (Circa 2600pc). The kender of Hylo, eager to explore their new home, began to travel the length and breadth of their land. When a few kender turned up missing, however, the Clan Chief Ferridin Hylo proposed a system to find them. While searching in parties for the missing kender, each person would sing a song as loud as they could. This, Ferridin maintained, would serve multiple purposes. He wrote:

It will instill morale in the searching kender as well as in the lost kender, should they hear it. It will serve as a guide for the lost kender to return to the group. It will frighten away animals that might otherwise harm the search parties. It will keep the search parties aware of each other, so that should one of them get lost, they may find their way back easily. Most importantly, it will be a lot of fun.

Remarkably, all of the lost kender were recovered easily. The trail song proved so effective that it became customary for Hylo kender to sing while traveling. By 2400pc, Hylo kender were greeting each other by saying, "I hear your song," to one another. This remained fashionable until shortly before the Rose Rebellion. It is still used in very formal situations, especially when meeting with people of political importance. While the kender of Balifor and, later, Kendermore adopted the trail song, they never popularized its use to the same degree as Hylo kender did.

Looking at historical record, it becomes clear that although these pieces are distinctly referred to as "trail songs," these simple tunes found their way into every aspect of Hylo society. They served as nursery rhymes for little ones. Young kender received their education through trail songs as well. For instance, "Thorns and Leaves" clearly originated as a method to teach kender

about harmful and beneficial plants. "The Adder's Tail" describes the markings of several varieties of poisonous snakes.

A trail song is also used in the traditional kender wedding ceremony. It begins:

*Two roads meet
In an unknown land,
And where they cross
Two kender stand.*

The kender exchange their vows in the song and pledge to explore new trails together.

In 1597pc, a kender by the name of Balistan Drynail proposed that trail songs be used to calculate distances. He set up markers along a trail that corresponded to the song, "Long Before Dark." He then invited kender to walk along the trail singing the song. To their surprise, the method proved very accurate, not to mention enjoyable. Kender began calculating distance in terms of the length of time it took to sing the song. That distance became known as a "Long."

When exploring a new trail, kender often sing several trail songs in succession. When they wish to turn back, they have only to sing the songs again to know exactly when they have reached their starting point. Thus began the kender expression, "Once the song to get you there; twice the song to get you home." This method, called "double-singing," proves very effective, so long as the kender do not stop either walking or singing.

The most famous use of "double-singing" occurred in the Age of Might. In 841pc, the infamous kender pirate Blithe Lighttoes, while on her death bed, imparted a list of trail songs to a priest of Paladine. Many scholars believe that the list is a "map" to Lighttoes's Treasure: thought to be worth a fortune in Istarian gold and jewels. However, since Lighttoes never indicated a starting point on her "map," no one has ever been able to find the treasure, although many—mainly kender—have tried.

Today, there are countless trail songs and variations of trail songs. In 311ac, a consortium called Wandering Tune began a study of trail songs. In ten years, they accounted for over three thousand original trail songs and no less than ten thousand variations on

those songs. These songs have been chronicled in the "Song Scrolls of Hylo" for posterity.

THE KENDER TONAL SYSTEM AND THEORY OF MUSIC

During the reign of Istar, the Qualinesti sage Gidolias sought a way to "effectively interpret and analyze the music of the various races of Krynn." In 512pc, he discovered that although the races of Krynn come from varying cultural backgrounds, much of their music shares a similar tonal basis.

According to Gidolias, nearly all music can be analyzed as a series of the following pitches:

Pa Sa Ha Mi Re Che Ta (Pa)

Each pitch is named after a god: Paladine, Sargonnas, Habbakkuk, Mishakal, Reorx, Chemosh, and Takhisis. To create a scale, one has only to begin on a certain pitch and follow the order of the pitches until they reach the one they began with. Thus, there are seven Celestial Modes whose names are derived from the gods representing the first note: Palian, Sargian, Habian, Mishian, Reorian, Chemian, and Takhian.

The Palian mode, also called Celestial Major, is the mode most often used by the Priests of Paladine and Knights of Solamnia. The Knights of Takhisis favor the Chemian and Sargian modes. The jarring and often unpleasant Takhian (called by Gidolias, "the Dark Queen in music") is often used by the Minotaurs.

Kender music, however, most frequently uses the Mishian and Reorian modes. These modes are highly similar to the Palian mode, and thus the untrained ear will mistake them. However, in both cases, there exists a note that does not match Celestial Major. As a result, kender have received a reputation for singing off-key. In fact, they are singing on-key, it is simply not the key the listener anticipates.

Kender music is unique in that it also uses a five-note scale with the following pitches:

Re Che Pa Sa Mi (Re)

Palanthian scholars have called this Gilean Harmony, due to the overall balance of the mode. Kender, however, refer to it as Rekipasamy. The musical style first originated after the First Cataclysm. Some time in the years between 20ac and 61ac it migrated from the main continent to Hylo. Hylo kender, in turn, invented a lilting, fast-paced dance played in this mode. It is called by the same name.

Like *Rekipasamy*, kender music is generally lively and energetic. They are fond of compound and irregular meters. A popular meter in kender music is the *three and two*: in which the meter alternates between three beats and two beats per measure. This meter is used often in dances.

Trail songs often use a much simpler meter, but they are no less bright in mood. Generally, trail songs are written in double meter. Occasionally, they are written in triple meter.

Kender Songs of Mourning are some of only a few exceptions to the lively style of kender music. Even these, however, are pure and simple. The kender often try to convey hope in even their darkest moments.

Since kender do not generally notate their music in the traditional—elf—manner, foreign scholars often find it difficult to transcribe kender music. Although the music maintains a definite meter, frequent hemiolas and rhythmic devices uncommon in other forms of music often confuse transcribers.

Kender most often learn their music by rote; however, since the First Cataclysm, an attempt has been made to document kender music. Many songs are recorded in the "Song Scrolls of Hylo." In order to be included in this official record of kender culture, a song must be certified as being of true kender origin. The great musicians of Hylo, the Loudsingers, vote as to whether to include a piece of music, however since only ten Loudsingers are needed to approve any one song, it is not a difficult achievement. At last count, there were over fifty thousand songs recorded.

The notation of kender music in the song scrolls is

distinctive. A solid line represents the melody. Increases and decreases of pitch are represented by the line bending up or down. Vertical slashes across the line represent breaks in the musical line or places where lyrics are inserted. The thickness of the line determines how loudly or softly the music should be played.

This notation is seldom used outside of the song scrolls. The first known use of line notation is a manuscript dated from 278pc. No one is sure who developed this notation. However, no other race uses it.

KENDER MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

While kender music has borrowed many musical styles and instruments from the cultures of Ansalon, certain aspects of kender music remain distinctively its own. Kender have developed many musical instruments to suit their tastes. A few examples of common kender instruments include:

THE FLOOZLE

The floozle is a special flute designed for playing *Rekipasamy*. They resemble recorders, ranging from a hand's breadth to two hands' breadths in length, and they give off a warm piping sound. They are made of either wood or clay. The floozle is high pitched but not shrill. It has only four holes, so it can be played with only one hand. The kender's other hand is then free to play other instruments. Sometimes, double floozles are made. They are designed to play two separate notes in unison.

THE BUMBER DRUM

The bumper drum is a hide drum much like those used by the plains people of Abanasinia. Its uses originated in Kendermore. The truly original concept behind the bumper drum is that it is large enough to hold a single kender. One kender plays the drum from the outside, while one on the inside alters the tautness of the drumhead to vary the pitch. These drums are often used in ceremonial music, and occasionally, they are used in dance music.

THE BELLOWS ORGAN

The bellows organ is a relatively new instrument. It is commonly thought to have been invented by Tasslehoff Burrfoot, although no concrete proof of this has ever been found. The bellows organ consists of a bellows strapped to a reed instrument like the Silvanesti shawm. The bellows is then pumped, creating music. The sound is often described as being akin to bagpipes, however there is a distinctive pitch change when the bellows are filled. It is this uncommon noise that has made this instrument exceedingly popular among kender. Although difficult to play, the bellows organ creates a distinct rich sound, and it is used both in ceremonial music and in dances.

THE HOOPAK

While the hoopak's functionality remains primarily that of a walking staff and defensive weapon, its peculiar ability to create sound has made it an instrument as well. The first recorded use of a hoopak as a musical instrument dates from the time of Huma, when a Solamnic Knight described a group of kender twirling their hoopaks in harmony. He wrote, "The kender will use anything as an instrument. We might

learn something from that ingenuity." In recent times, musical hoopaks are specially tuned to correspond with various musical keys. They are commonly used as drones. Hoopaks have also been used to strike and sling stones at a bumber drum.

THE SPOONS

The use of spoons as an instrument originated in Balifor, Circa 2000pc. Spoons are a favorite kender instrument, and their popularity has extended to the humans of Balifor as well. Often, a kender will play a floozle with one hand and the spoons with the other, although some maintain that true mastery of the spoons requires both hands. Spoons are used most often in dances, or they are played as a solo instrument.

KENDER MUSICIANSHIP

Despite what is commonly believed, kender have a high regard for musicianship. Like their music theory, however, their concept of the ideal often differs from other races.

These differences can best be expressed in terms of specific situations, rather than generalizations. For instance, kender are the only known race to prefer singing in a straight tone over singing with vibrato. The kender believe that all voices will harmonize better if they remain true to the note. Vowels are kept simple and bright for the same reasons. Often, this is mistaken for a lack of technique. However, professional kender musicians practice for many years to perfect these skills.

In addition, frequent ad-libbing on the part of all players is encouraged. The kender Loudsinger Rill Heathertop wrote, "While purity of sound should always be stressed, individual exploration must also be allowed. Without such, we are not musicians. We are merely instruments."

Few kender use the title "bard" unless they are dwelling among humans or elves. The Loudsingers derived their name, it is believed, from a bastardization of "Laudsinger," a member of the Old Ergothian Choir of Paladine. Loudsingers share numerous responsibilities. The most important of these is the maintenance of the Song Scrolls of Hylo. Beyond this, Loudsingers are given the duty of leading their fellow kender in song and dance. Often, the title is given over a particular area where the kender is dwelling: Loudsinger of Ocean Town, or Loudsinger of Hylo. The larger the area the Loudsinger represents, the greater the honor attributed to the Loudsinger. Despite this, all Loudsingers have equal stature in the eyes of their peers. Loudsingers are acknowledged as the best kender musicians, and once the title is received it cannot be revoked. There have been as many as one hundred Loudsingers at one time, but there is seldom more than fifty. Loudsingers are not required to attend their meetings, however, and generally, not more than thirty come to any one convention. The largest number of Loudsingers ever to come to a meeting is seventy-four. This occurred in 419pc and is now known as "The Great Convening." Despite its name, the records state that nothing of great consequence happened at this meeting. The arrival of so many Laudsingers was purely circumstantial.

KENDER MUSIC IN A NEW AGE

Since the Second Cataclysm and the coming of the Dragon Overlords, several new trends have originated in kender music.

Chief among these is the music of the afflicted kender. This music has developed a dark, even foreboding quality to it. The use of the Habian mode is clearly part of this. In her assessment of the refugees' flight from Kendermore, the Knight of Solamnia Shedra uth Belar wrote:

The Habian mode touches something deep and stirring in our souls, like an old pain we cannot rid ourselves of. It echoes with the

cry of the desperate masses, and it descends upon the listener like a shower of tears.

The use of the Habian mode has also become common in the songs of human refugees. It is unclear which race influenced which, or whether it is a side-effect of Dragonfear. However, the sound of it has been called "a dark prophecy of our time."

The afflicted, however, are not the only kender to sow discontent in their music. Some Hylo kender, upset by the political upheaval caused by the Kendermore refugees, have voiced their protests in song. They call themselves, Natre Baile, an Old Ergothian phrase meaning, "Our Voice." Led by Verilim Standar, author of the ballad, "The Ungrateful," they routinely travel from town to town to spread their message.

Both the current Hylo government and the deposed Windseed family have frowned upon Natre Baile, and Fallana Windseed herself gave a speech against their message. She said:

It is unthinkable that kender should speak against one another. There should be no distrust among kender. No matter where we have lived, we are one people. We are all kender.

Despite her words, a growing number of kender have come to support Natre Baile. Their music has increased in popularity.

In 26sc, Hylo's ruler Belladonna passed a mandate forbidding the Loudsingers of Hylo to add Natre Baile songs into the Song Scroll of Hylo. This caused much commotion among both Natre Baile supporters and the Loudsingers. Never, since the creation of the position, had any ruler sought to control the Loudsingers' decisions. Although Natre Baile songs have thus far been excluded from the song scrolls, Belladonna has lost some support among Hylo kender.

KENDER MUSIC IN THE FUTURE

Amid this time of upheaval and change, kender music has continued to grow, expand and diversify. From the earliest, it has stressed change in convention, growing from its common ancestry with other music

into something that is uniquely inspired.

Will Ansalon see a time when the kender trail song is as long forgotten as the Irda "Offerings"? Will there come a time so bleak that kender music vanishes completely? No one can truly be sure.

However, the world would benefit from listening to the words of Goldmoon of the Qué-Shu. Once, when asked if there was any hope left for Krynn, she pointed to a group of kender. "As long as there are kender," she said, "there will be music. As long as there is music, there will always be hope."



SONGS AND MUSIC OF KRYNN

LAMENT FOR LOST GODS

This is one of the most heart-rending songs I have collected recently. As far as I know it exists only in this form and so was probably composed soon after the Chaos War when the gods left Krynn. I found it amid the rubble of a house belonging to Berrenclarnosti, elven scholar and musician. He was believed murdered a year after the Chaos War ended by thieves who coveted the metals in some of the instruments he collected.

There are few indications in the music related to performing this song: I have left it so intentionally because the key, the phrasing, and the words say everything necessary. Give your ear to the song, and the music will deliver the test.

Mirrashar, Elven bard

Passionately from Mirrashar's Collection

Who will look -
down on us, who will in - ter - ce - de? Who - will an - swer
ques - tions, help in time of need? Who - will guide our

fair - ing forth to near or far? Who - will take an
in - ter - est in flood, in storm, in war? The gods we knew
are van - ished, nev - er more to still the pleas - of aching
voi - ces so lone, - so panned, so shrill. Is there any -

29 hope left? Will there soon ap - pear a dawn-un-dimmed by

29

33 sor - row, a dawn un-masked by fear When we can be en -

33

37 cour - aged by guardians in the skies who sing - to us of

37

41 suc - cor, who prom - ise us a serye - of things e - ter - nal.

41

45 a tempo All a - lone, a - ben - doned we

45

49 cry p.ead - ding for one bright hand - owned by an im -

49

53 mor - tal when - gods re - turn to Krynn.

53

57

57

DIRGE FOR THE ELVES

Thousands of my people died during the War of the Lance, the Chaos War, and after. If any other races on Krynn noted their passing or the sudden lack of elven influence in society, those few mortals were prohibited from setting down tributes by difficulties of their own. So I have taken it upon myself to write a fitting dirge for the elves and include it within the archives of Krynn's music.

The work is very modal, with hints of major keys existing within like bright stars glowing from the vault of the blackest night. It has never been performed except upon the small pipe organ to which I have occasional access. As I play it, I imagine a humming chorus singing the treble line in time to the measured tread of the parts.

I dedicate the Dirge for the elven people to all of my race who have perished unsung, for those dying now, and for all those in the future who pass on with none to remember where or why they fell.

Tir ast jaruck o naden dorassan te tesals o vethryn usihalas.

Translation: May my work bring quiet to your passing and comfort to your spirits.

Mirrashar, Elven bard

Doloroso by Mirrashar

Musical score for page 224, measures 37-53. The score is written for piano in G major (one sharp). It consists of five systems of two staves each. Measure numbers 37, 41, 45, 49, and 53 are indicated at the start of each system. The music features a melody in the right hand and a harmonic accompaniment in the left hand. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte) starting at measure 49.

Musical score for page 225, measures 57-65. The score is written for piano in G major (one sharp). It consists of three systems of two staves each. Measure numbers 57, 61, and 65 are indicated at the start of each system. The music continues the melody and accompaniment from the previous page. Dynamics include *mp* (mezzo-piano) at measure 57 and *pp* (pianissimo) at measure 61.

DWARVEN FORGE SONG

I had great difficulty getting dwarves to play and sing this work for me, and even more in finagling a score from them. So I did my best to memorize what I heard during a performance in a very dark cavern, which was made exceptionally dramatic by the accompanying hammers flinging sparks from the anvils they struck. This song is revered as a treasure among the dwarves and exists in as many different versions as there are dwarven strongholds. This one seems most prevalent.

The chorus always makes me think they see the metals and jewels in their hands or adorning the wearer as they sing. Performers for the hammer parts are always chosen carefully—usually these go to one each of the oldest and youngest metalworkers in the settlement, or to a master and apprentice who have together created an unusually rich and dynamic jewel. The elder wields the larger hammer, the youth or apprentice the smaller.

"Rich," "dynamic" and "jewel" should all reside in the performer's mind during this piece. More than the usual pains need to be taken to render the song memorable. I have heard militant dwarves threaten to shackle the musicians for months to lightless subterranean cave walls after a lackluster performance.

Mirrashar, *Elven bard*

Con fuoco From Mirrashar's Collection

Voice

French Horns

Hammers

Met - al rings be - neath my ham - mer,
Pre - cious gem - stones glint and glim - mer

Steel takes shape on an -vil cold. Fire glows bright with sighs from bel - lows,
Fast - ened 'round a shadow - ed throat. Shin - ing from a wrist, a fin - ger,

9

Gold, sil - ver, bronze, all these to - mold
Bounty - from a weal - thy - world.

13

Met - al sings be - neath my ham - mer, Star - bright sparks - rain down and fade.
Met - al sings be - neath our ham - mers, Wax drips soft - ly from our molds

17

Quench the blank - in fog - draped wa - ter, Draw - fire a - gain and none - a - froid.
Re - or's gifts - em - braced by dwarf - kind, Jewel - and - chal - roe, ring - and sigil.

21

Be - comethe wor - ship of our - minds, Be - comethe kin - ship of one - vi - gil.

25

All of - Krynn - our work be - hold. All of Krynn - our work be

29

hold!

GULLY DWARF HEALING SONG

Being mired in a gully dwarf camp during a storm is bad enough, but the rest of the situation will eventually come to light, so I must confess. I, Mirrashar, actually assisted gully dwarves to compose a song for themselves and promised to enter it in my collection of Krynn's musical works. I suppose this happened because I was soaked and tired at the time and was beset by some of the more bright and tenacious members of the settlement after a meal I couldn't eat.

The melody is necessarily simple. Although there are four separate verses and a chorus, the gully dwarves always sang everything they remembered of their favorite one, making the words gibberish. The first (and likely last) performance ended in a shouting match regarding who had the loudest voice. The accompaniment is usually three gully dwarves banging cooking pots of various sizes with wooden spoons in no particular rhythm. This does not usually last long, however. One, and sometimes all of them, abandon the duty to wander away during various stages of the work. How long they stay during a performance depends entirely on the length of their attention span.

I sincerely hope my reputation as an elven bard has not been besmirched by either composing this piece or adding it to my collection. I offer it for what it is, probably the only gully dwarf piece recorded at this time.

Mirrashar, *Elven Bard*

Gully from Mirrashar's Collection

Be there strings of green - ey goop in you head like
 Stew is fight - ing back to - night? Should - ens caught a
 Hail danced dimp - les on you head? Fall smack down in
 Pim - ples on you ear - lobes, blue fun - gus on you

4

ides? Bel - ly do - ing flop - flops? Nose
 shiver? Mage he threw a spell on you?
 slime? Knight he knocked big hole in you?
 toes, Ouch a - mong you in - sides,

7

red e - nough to hide? Rat it was some
 Light - ring left you quiver? Crossed a drag - on's
 He all right in time! Got huge curse laid
 sick from gods may know. Got - ta get soon

10

o - ver - aged when you cared to dine?
 path a - gain, skin burned, mus - cles sore?
 on you tail? Toe swole big as tree?
 bet - ter, im por - tant things to do.

13

Got a good cure sure e - nough, soon you be all
 Got fix thing to fix you up: stand still, get the
 Do not fret, the Liz - ard Cure'll sure soon set you
 Stand real still, the Liz - ard Cure gonna take care a

16

finel
 cure!
 free!
 you!

Liz - ard Cure, Liz - ard Cure,

19

it sure make you whole. Get - bet - ter,

22

in - hale scent, should be you on - ly goals

25

Do not mind its cold dead eyes star - ing at you

28

chin. Just think what it do for you,

31

make you right a - gain!

HYMN TO MT. NEVERMIND

FANFARE AND ANTHEM

Despite the brevity of its words and the oddities of its orchestration, this work is known as the gnome national anthem. Obviously (and unfortunately) some of it has been lost over the years. Musicians of my acquaintance wonder occasionally what the missing lyrics included. They will ever remain one of the mysteries of Krynn.

This piece is normally played on a small pipe organ with a rather nasal tone, or by an ensemble of instruments, or both if available. Since the gnomes who play music typically have their own self-invented instruments, the gathering is often a bluster of trumpets with three bells pointed upward and to each side, bassoons whose tops resemble a pipe organ made of wood, and horns so long it takes a machine to blow a tremendous volume of air through them before they'll sound notes deep in the bass range. For their favored instruments, each gnome also invents a method of tuning that is slightly different from any other. Therefore when it plays together, the ensemble is always out of tune. Performance of this work is often an ear-flogging experience for listeners.

I have slowed this piece down from its normal gnomish speed. Some renderings of this piece are over in ten seconds. Please notice that during the final sounding of the fanfare the ensemble often begins to fight, usually bass against treble. (These battles can last some time. I have abbreviated the one in this manuscript due to space considerations and lack of parchment.) Typically an elder (or occasionally the conductor), bellows "Hey!" in a likely spot to gain their attention and return the instrumentalists to order. I have left these embellishments in the score because they are a normal part of the work.

Mirrashar, Elven Bard

Molto energico

From Mirrashar's Collection

fff

beau - ti - ful moun - tain, Store - house to won - der - ful things

past ac - count - in! Long may you stand, nei - ther

crum - bled nor rot - ten (There was an - oth - erverse here)

25 we've for - (got - ten) But nev - er-mind. Nev - er-mind Where the

25

29 pas - sage of days is both noble land - kind

29

33 *ff*

33

37 *fff* 3 3 3 3 HEY!

37

41

41

45

45

THINKING SONG

This is a peculiar little piece for voice and penny whistle, soprano recorder, or flute if neither of the other instruments is available. It is easily performed a capella and probably originally existed that way, passed from one mage to another. I do not know precisely where it comes from. A torn and dirty manuscript copy appeared one day among the collection.

Please be careful! I have performed this piece twice, and peculiar things always happen during and afterward. An owl landed at my feet in broad daylight and sang with me the first time; the second time a strong wind sprang up and flattened shelters and several trees. I believe this song to be much more than the innocuous little melody it appears. Sing it with great caution.

Mirrashar, *Elven bard*

Con spirito From Mirrashar's Collection

Voice

Whistle

1

If

5

thought is the moth er of all - good - ne - tion, then

9

what is the child - of plain dis - trac - tion?

13

Think! Pay at - ten - tion! Let - your mind - change! Make

17

ev - ery - day things com - pli - cat - ed and - strange! There are

21

fish to be fried, but - first to be caught so -

25

spread wide the nets and get tan gled in thought! So

29

29 spread wide the nets and get tan - gled in thought!

33

33

MINUET IN C

Frederic Francis Shallowford was twenty years old when he journeyed to Palanthas to further his career in music. There, under the patronage of the Palanthian aristocracy, he wrote the numerous grand operas for which he is famous. His rather individual style of opera known as opera sortis, centered around popular military themes (and elaborate battle scenes) and earned him the honorary title, Knight of the Note.

This piece, however, was not written to impress the masses in some grand opera hall. It was written to impress a beautiful Palanthian noblewoman with whom the young musician had fallen in love. At the time, Shallowford had been hired to compose several pieces for string quartet that could be played in the drawing rooms of the nobility and at small social gatherings. Shallowford had hoped to impress the daughter of a nobleman by including her name in the title of his latest work. However, just before he presented his newest composition, entitled *Madeline's Minuet*, it was announced that the young woman had just become engaged to a young Knight of Solamnia. Hastily, Shallowford changed the title to the first thing he could think of, *Minuet in the Key of C*.

Music cataloged by Jarrus Locastus, Assistant, Great Library of Palanthus

Allegretto (♩ = 140)

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

11

19

27

27

35

37

Fine

D.C. al Fine

KNIGHTS OF THE FOURTH BRIGADE

This melody was originally composed as a drinking song in the pleasant days after The War of the Lance. With its upbeat lyrics, parts for two fiddles, and a quick-step dance beat, it soon became a favorite tune in the pubs of Northern Ergoth. As the story goes, a homesick Ergothian squire on his first training mission with the Knights of the Crown sang the pub song one night in camp. By chance Lord Knight Jorge Goldcastle heard the melody, liked the cadence, and began to hum the tune himself. The next day, Goldcastle noticed that the tune's lively beat fit perfectly with the cadence of his marching Knights. Soon after, Goldcastle wrote new words and adopted the tune as the official song of his regiment, the Fourth Brigade.

Music cataloged by Jarrus Locastus
Assistant, Great Library of Palanthus

March Tempo (♩ = 150)

Fife I & II

Drums

When we're march-ing off in to dan-ger, to the pla-ces e-vil may
 don our swords and our ar-mor us to the pro-tect lure a king or e-nem-
 dra-gon fear will not scare us nor the lure of e-vil en-

range here to pro- a loved one or stran- gar-
 fac- mer, to de- fend a cas- le from here, } we're the Fourth Bri-
 share us for our oath of hon or pre- prepares us (Chorus)

gade. To pro - tect is our du - ty as The Mes - sure doth de - cree, we'll

serve with faith and loy - al - ty bring - ing Knights of the Crown glo - ry. When we E vil ry.

Lyrics of the pub song are as follows:

[Verse 1]

In this place of friendship and laughter,
Where the music sounds to the rafters.
Let no glass be empty hereafter,
As we sing this song.

[Chorus]

Let us lift our mugs of ale,
To good times we'll give a hail,
And lift a glass and tell the tale
Of the friends who are gathered here.

[Verse 2]

All the liquor here is the strong kind,
If you drink enough you will soon find,
That you've lost your cares and you don't mind,
If you stay till dawn. (Chorus)

[Verse 3]

Patrons here are stout and quite able,
To drink Reorx under the table.
Tales of our deeds spread like a fable
Across Ansalon. (Chorus)

[Verse 4]

All the serving girls are quite pretty,
And they all seem willing and witty.
There's no better place in the city
Open all night long. (Chorus)

[Verse 5]

To the good times here we'll sing our praise,
Just as long as somebody else pays!
Then our glasses once again we'll raise,
As we sing along! (Chorus)



Ages of gods and dragons, of dwarves and elves and men have risen and fallen across the face of Krynn, and always the River of Time runs on. Now, in the early days of the Age of Mortals, the continent of Ansalon suffers some of the greatest ravages in a long, tumultuous history. The old gods and the long-practiced powers of magic are gone. So, too, is the scribe who has recorded the passage of history's previous ages. Astinus Lorekeeper has closed his last volume, departing his Great Library and vanishing into the misty banks of his eternal river. Yet still that river flows, and its many tales are recorded by historians old and new. The tomes of Nathal the Chronicler have documented many of the years since the Second Cataclysm. Elder historians tutored under Astinus, including Foryth Teel and the ever-loyal Bertrem, have also continued to make their contributions. Although they labor without the Lorekeeper's all-seeing guidance, they have combined to keep a credible record.

Too, there are still bards who wear the ancient minstrels' time-honored mantles. Quivalin Soth of the elves, the dwarven balladeer Chisel Loremaster, and many more continue to sing the ballads of history. These tales are always skewed to the teller's point of view, of course, but all are structured around important kernels of truth. And a new bard, the Herald, now travels Ansalon, singing songs of awe and darkness, promise and hope. He is a mysterious figure who claims to have no knowledge of his own past but is possessed of a canny insight into the memories, the life stories of all the peoples of Krynn.

This is the continuing river as these storytellers travel it and as the current continues to flow.

SECOND CATAclysm AND CHAOS WAR

Convulsions wrack Ansalon and the surrounding oceans as Chaos, Father of all and of Nothing, unleashes vengeful war against his children and all their creations. Frost- and shadow-wights, fire dragons, and daemon warriors ravage the continent, as oceans boil and the sun stands still in the sky. New islands, the Teeth of Chaos, rise from the northern sea where the Rift of Chaos had been torn into the world.

Ultimately, as the price of victory—or at least survival—all the gods retire from the world. The three moons of magic and the old stars of the constellations—including Takhisis and Paladine—are shattered and scattered across the sky; the Maelstrom in the Blood Sea finally grows placid. Most of the chaos monsters depart with their creator, though parts of the continent remain dark with their destructive presence.

A single, pale moon appears in the night, while a new red star gleams from the southern sky.

A NEW DAWN

The world awakens to new truths: magic spells and all powers drawn from the gods are mere memories. But already people are discovering other realities as well, realities that mark this as the Age of Mortals. People find strengths within each other and within themselves.

In Solace, a tomb is raised to the heroes who defeated Chaos. At the Council of the Last Heroes, the opposing Orders of Knights agree to a grudging truce; much of the eastern portion of the continent is granted to the Knights of Takhisis.

In Palanthas, the Tower of High Sorcery and the contents of Astinus's Great Library vanish. Throughout Ansalon many dragons, both chromatics and metallics, emerge from hiding.

THE RED MARAUDER COMES

Malystrixx the Red, a dragon far huger than any living in Ansalon, flies from the eastern ocean to land and devastates the Misty Isle. Because of her immensity, a black dragon heralds her arrival as a return of Takhisis—until Malys kills him and then lays waste to the island. A daemon warrior attempts to use her for his own ends. He, too, is slain, but not before he informs Malys of many rich lands to the west of her remote and ruined island.

Pleased by the slayings and the devastation, Malys flies west to the Dairly Plains. Like a force of nature she churns into Ansalon, leaving a bleak wasteland of the plains, then sweeping into Kendermore with the same horrific effects. The cheerful kender are stunned and shattered by the onslaught. Only the skill and courage of Riverwind, Hero of the Lance, saves the people of Kendermore, who escape their city and flee into Balifor.

A courageous female of Kendermore, Blister Nimblefingers, leads a party of ten of her countrymen to OGREBOND, seeking to carry word of the disaster to the Knights of Solamnia on Sancrist Isle. Blister alone survives the trek, and her mission succeeds.

And far away in Solace, a son is born to Palin and Usha Majere. It is hoped that Ulin will one day grow to become a mighty wizard like his father and a friend to all dragons.

RACK AND RUIN

Within months Balifor is also under attack. As refugees spread up and down the coast, tales of the great red dragon are carried far and wide. Several chromatic dragons fly from the Khalkist Mountains to challenge this monstrous intruder. Malystrixx enjoys the killing of each, retaining the lesser dragons' skulls as trophies.

THE SKULL TOTEM

As she slays more dragons, Malys discovers that she can use the might of her victims to create a totem. This is at first a monument to her own power, but soon becomes a means to exert virtually godlike magical control over her realm. She creates the Desolation, ravaging pastoral plains and forests, changing them into grotesque mountains, volcanic rifts, and fiery summits. Eventually the eastern shores of the Bay of Balifor come to a boil. A lofty mountain, broad and flat at its cloud-bound summit, rises in the center of the Desolation.

A great blue dragon, Khellendros, once called "Skie" by his rider, Dragon Highlord Kitiara, begins to ravage the Northern Wastes. He, too, slays many dragons in the ongoing Dragon Purge and raises a totem of his

own. Soon sandy desert sweeps outward from his lair, and the Blue Waste expands to the fringes of Palanthas.

In Neraka, the Knights of Takhisis form a stronghold, arranging an alliance with the many chromatic dragons living in the nearby Khalkists. Meanwhile, a vision of Steel Brightblade in Solace leads his adoptive mother to form the Legion of Steel, a new Order with a passion for justice and loyalty. Also in the famed tree-city Linsha Majere is born; this daughter and granddaughter of heroes is destined to answer the call of her proud heritage by one day becoming a Knight of the Rose.

RISE OF THE LEGION

Small, secretive bands of warriors gather in all of Ansalon's cities, under the banner of the Legion of Steel. Searching for faith in the absence of gods, these men and women pledge to aid each other and the downtrodden in every way they can.

A green dragon, Beryllintranox, attacks Qualinesti. Beryl begins to hunt other dragons here and in the High Kharolis; these battles develop with little significant retaliation from the elves and humans of these realms. But after darkness comes the light. A despairing Goldmoon is granted a vision of new powers, a healing magic that can be drawn from within a person of great spiritual strength. She uses this power of the heart to save the life of Jasper Fireforge, the nephew of her lost companion Flint.

DRAGON AND DRAGONMEN

A mighty black dragon, Onysablet, claims the eastern coast of the New Sea. Swiftly slaying many lesser

dragons, Sable vastly increases her own size and power. Soon the lands of her realm are mired in a trackless, boggy swamp extending hundreds of miles.

Fearing slavery under the Dark Knights, many dracoonians flee northward from Neraka. In Teyr they form a stronghold that soon grows into a small realm.

MAGIC OLD AND NEW

Word of Goldmoon's new mystic magic spreads. Meanwhile Palin, determined to hold together the old Orders, becomes the head of the White Robes.

POWER OF THE HEART

Goldmoon becomes the high priestess of a new mystic faith; soon bands of pilgrims are drawn to her from across the world. She founds the Citadel of Light on the Isle of Schallsea.

A monstrous red dragon, Pyrothraxus, claims a realm in Mount Nevermind. Pyro and the gnomes commence a terrible war. Eventually he is maddened by his failure to eradicate the pesky natives.

DIVERGENT DESTINIES

Malys, Sable, and Khellendros continue to hunt and kill lesser dragons. As each totem expands, so does the Great Dragon overlord's realm. Beryl has slain many dragons in the area of Qualinesti, though she has yet to create a totem.

On Sancrist, the Knights of Solamnia hold a council

to mourn the passing of Lord Gunthar and to elect a Grand Master. He is Liam Erhling, and he proposes a new Measure for the new age: No longer is it enough to rely upon honor as the perfect goal of life. Instead, the Knights will place their value and their trust in each other. In the wake of Lord Gunthar's death, the Solamnics even extend the olive branch to the Dark Knights, pledging a new partnership between the two Orders. True to form, however, the Dark Knights betray the trust of their brethren and strife erupts upon Sancrist Isle. Strangely, it takes a gully dwarf to expose the treachery of the Evil paladins.

The need for cooperation is a lesson learned across the world with increasing frequency. In Northern Solamnia, a young woman named Mirta uses her new awareness to unite her tribe; on Sancrist Jarrad Borfson, an aspiring young warrior, sees that his true destiny is tilling the fields of his father's farm.

ELVEN SECLUSION

The Silvanesti elves raise a magical shield around their realm. The shimmering wall proves impervious to humans and dragons, though a green dragon remains within the sylvan forest. As in an age long past, the elves in their ancient kingdom turn their backs on the rest of the world.

A CHILLING FROST

A great white dragon, Gellidus, called Frost by men, invades Southern Ergoth. He slays much of the population, including numerous native dragons. Within months he has raised a totem on the island. Blizzards rage into being, and within weeks a massive glacier has formed over the northern reaches of that once-temperate island. Stormy seas and plunging icebergs rage around the coasts, and the approaches to the Bay of Darkness freeze, creating an icebound lake.

KENDER AND PRIESTESS

Belladonna Juniper, a survivor of the Kender Flight from their ravaged eastern homeland, leads her new countrymen in Hylo. When friction arises between the kender and the goblins to the south, the ever-wary Belladonna learns the difference between a threat and a neighbor.

On the isle of Sancrist, Lady Crysania arrives to advise the Solamnic High Council. Armed with a new skill in the powers of the heart, the elderly priestess is instrumental in convincing the Grand Master to send veteran Sword and Rose Knights to Goldmoon for instruction in the mystic arts.

BLUE AND BRASS

Stenndunuu, a great blue dragon, rages onto the Plains of Dust with hurricane force. Humans and centaurs flee the onslaught of the wyrm they call Thunder. Small bands of the two civilizations unite for mutual survival. Within a year, the two displaced peoples have formally pledged support and interdependency, uniting to form the nation of Duntollik.

Some men and women have begun to discover sources of magic, limited spell abilities that are drawn not from the vanished gods of magic, but from within the world. Word of this new sorcery spreads slowly and, naturally, many of the old mages are skeptical—and envious.

A huge brass dragon, Iyesta, called Splendor, challenges Thunder. She distracts the blue from his attempt to build a totem, and the two mighty wyrms claim realms in the southern plains.

WYRMS OF THE NORTH

A massive red dragon, Fenalysten, or Cinder, claims a mountainous realm in central Ansalon, and green Lorrinar, called Fume, arrives to settle in an adjacent forest. Along the coast of Nordmaar, a mighty black dragon named Mohrlax, or Pitch, claims the Great Moors. None of these dragons is able to create a totem, but each quickly becomes master of anything and everyone within its borders.

CONQUEST OF THE ICEREACH

Icewall Glacier is claimed by two monstrous white dragons, Frisindia and Cryonisis—called Freeze and Ice by men. The twin wyrms immediately seek and slay all lesser dragons within their reach, but they are unable to create even a single totem between them.

DRAGONSPAWN

Khellendros discovers a hideous power: He can fuse the body of a human with the spirit of a draconian. The resulting creature, a dragonspawn, is mightier than either of its progenitors. Khellendros begins to create an army of spawn, jealously guarding the secret from the other overlords.

DRAGON REALMS

In the east, the realm of Malys has grown into a vast Desolation, though she has permitted the survival of a few coastal cities. Khellendros is named the "Storm

Over Krynn," and his Blue Waste encroaches upon a vast swath of northern Solamnia. Sable and Frost have now entrenched themselves within vast realms—of swampland and glacier, respectively.

A mysterious figure emerges from the Desolation. He displays hitherto unknown magical powers, and is called the Shadow Sorcerer.

24sc

SORCERY IN CHAOS

As the mages of old despair at ever regaining their former powers, Palin Majere rises to the leadership of the Conclave of Wizards. Desperately, he searches for the key to the magic his uncle once told him he was fated to find.

25sc

GREEN GLORY

Beryl finally succeeds in creating a totem within the depths of her forest home, and immediately the woodlands of Qualinesti grow thick and tangled. She claims power over the elven nation; faced with the prospect of extermination, the elven Speaker Gilthas capitulates. Now considered dark elves, Alhana Starbreeze and Porthios vow to free Qualinesti so their son, Silvanoshei, may rule a united elven nation.

27sc

TERROR OF THE DEEP

The peaceful sea elves of Dimernesti find themselves subjected to the tyranny of Brine, the mightiest of the sea serpents. He terrorizes the elves with his powerful steam breath and his insatiable appetite. The grandeur of Dimernost dims under his baleful shadow.

28sc

MAGIC REBORN!

A few wizards have learned to tap into the arcane powers of Krynn enough to weave minor magics. Yet all of the old and traditional teachings, spellbooks, and components remain useless. Mage Palin Majere, together with the Master of the Tower of Wayreth and the Shadow Sorcerer, gather at Wayreth, the lone Tower of Sorcery still standing. The ever-mysterious Shadow Sorcerer helps the elder mages learn more about this new magic. They realize that their old spells are in fact obsolete—but that the energy within themselves, and the world, is a force capable of phenomenal power. This meeting is called the Last Conclave, and the three Orders of the old robes are disbanded.

The three wizards use their newfound skills to save the Qualinesti from the wrath of Beryl. Afterward, they vow to spread knowledge of this new power, and the Shadow Sorcerer disappears. Within a year, Palin has established a school of the new sorcery near Solace.

29sc

DWARVEN REBELLION

Beryllinthrano, seeking to create a realm as vast as the other four overlords', sends green dragons against Thorbardin. While the verdant frontier expands swiftly under the influence of her landshaping power, a renegade band of dwarves led by the Daewar prophet Severus Stonehand decides to use the egg of a fire dragon as a weapon; the resulting explosion destroys the attacking dragons but also causes vast devastation to the dwarven realm.

Exiled, Severus leads a great column of dwarves toward the ancient clanhomes in the faraway Khalkists.

Skie has difficulty controlling the dragonspawn process. At least one spawn has retained the memories

of its human portion; that creature, with the skills of a master assassin, sets about to destroy those who spread the blue overlord's power and influence.

30sc

HOME COMING

The dwarven trek takes more than a year and a half. When Severus and his refugees finally reach the corrupted dwarven realm of Zhakar, they quickly overrun the plague-ridden dwarven denizens. The prophet Stonehand uses his mystic powers to cure the mold-borne blight that has affected Zhakar for centuries. The newly vibrant realm adopts once again the ancient name: Thoradin.

Content with the extent of her realm and worried about the increasing power of the other overlords, Malystrixx visits the other mighty wyrms and imposes an end to the Dragon Purge. The five overlords agree to occupy Ansalon among them, and to aid each other against the incursion of any additional great wyrms.

Commanding subject humans and other dragons, the overlords retire to their lairs—while everywhere under their talons the peoples and lesser dragons of Krynn strive for escape, and for freedom.

31sc

A CALL TO HEROES

Goldmoon calls Dhamon Grimwulf and the Heroes of the Heart to reclaim artifacts of great power that can give mortals hope for triumph against the dragon overlords. Armed with the dragonlance of Sturm Brightblade, they face dragons, Dark Knights, and the sinister spawn.

In the same year, an orphan girl named Mina washes up on the shores of the Citadel with no memory of

her parents or her past. Seeing in her a great magical talent, Goldmoon adopts the child and oversees her instruction in the power of the heart. The mistress of the Citadel believes that Fate will lay its hand upon young Mina one day and inspire the girl to greatness.

32sc

TALE OF AN ELVEN PRINCE

In a daring rescue of prisoners destined to become dragonspawn, Palin Majere rescues Gilthanas from Dark Knight captivity. The elven prince has spent decades wandering the land in search of Silvara, his dragon love. The two ultimately are reunited in the frozen realm of Southern Ergoth and join together in battle against foul Frost. They emerge victorious, and the famed Tomb of Huma remains safe from encroaching Evil—for the time being.

On a somber note, Goldmoon falls to her onetime champion: the former Dark Knight Dhamon Grimwulf, now magically under the control of Malys. The death of the priestess is a wound to all Krynn's followers of Light.

33sc

DRAGON CONCLAVE

Malys calls the dragon overlords together for a secret ritual. Krynn shall have a new goddess, and it shall be Malystrixx! Using her own powers and the latent magics within the tributes brought by the other overlords, the Red begins her powerful spell—just as Palin Majere and the Heroes of the Heart arrive to disrupt the ceremony. They manage to distract Malys and her comrades long enough for Skie to deal her a crushing blow. The Blue dragon seizes the arcane energies and uses them to activate a portal into another realm—the world of the spirits, known as the Gray, where he seeks the shade of his long-lost rider and partner, Kitiara. In this battle, sung by bards and recorded by

scholars, Goldmoon is reborn through the sacrifice of her dwarven protegee Jasper Fireforge, and a penitent Dhamon finds forgiveness.

34sc FATE OF A FOREST

Keen observers of the Silvanesti Shield have seen the once verdant land around it begin to wither in recent years. The trees, grass, and other plants on both sides of the shield have turned brown and dead, and locals fear the same fate soon will befall the entire forest. Despite decades of trying, no one has been able to penetrate this magical barrier.

General Mirielle Abrena, head of the Dark Knights and governor of Neraka, survives an assassination attempt—not the first to target her since her rise to power at the dawn of the new age. As the assassin was killed in the attempt, no one has been able to determine the identity of the culprit or the motivation for the attack.

The Dark Knights themselves conspire in an attack on another powerful figure: Princess Mercidith, only daughter of the Emperor of Ergoth. Not long ago, the emperor sent Mercy to the Citadel of Light, so that she might learn to control her latent magical power—the ability to see and speak with spirits. During her time on Schallsea Isle, the girl grows strong in her talent and, with the help of classmates, foils a kidnapping attempt by the Knights, working as agents of the black dragon Sable.

Meanwhile, in the common room of the Inn of the Last Home, the elderly Caramon Majere pens the *Bestiary*. This engaging tome recounts this hero's encounters with creatures both kind and cruel during his adventuring days. The book, featuring editor's notes from Bertrem the Aesthetic, is published by the Great Library of Palanthas.

35sc OGRES AND WIZARDS

Ogre villages repeatedly fall to attacks by Dark Knights interested in setting up supply bases along the route to Sanction. It seems the Knights are preparing for a major offensive against that stalwart city, which is protected by a powerful magic-wielding lord governor named Hogan Bight. However, their conquests along the way turn many of the Order's allied ogre tribes into opponents.

Wizards throughout Ansalon note a waning of their new found magical powers. Palin and the mages at the Academy of Sorcery devote their time to try to understand why and remedy the problem, but as yet no one can explain this strange and terrible phenomenon. The value of magical artifacts from the Fourth Age increases immeasurably, although these artifacts are continuing to behave erratically. Mistress Jenna, in Palanthas, who traffics in artifacts, is becoming an extremely wealthy woman!

The mystics at the Citadel of Light notice to their disquiet that their healing powers are not as effective as they once were. The mystics of the Dark Knights note the same. Each order blames the other for the loss.

Although the dragons are keeping this secret, they, too discover that their magical powers are also starting to dwindle. Beryl blames this on her cousin Malys and urges the Gray Robes to pursue even more relentlessly their search for the fabled Tower of High Sorcery at Wayreth, which she believes will grant her all the power she needs to become the supreme ruler of Ansalon.

36sc YEARNING FOR PAST GLORY

A new breed of ogre has risen in the lands of Kern and Blöde. These blue-skinned, magic-wielding giants,

called titans, are the result of magical rituals in which ogre shamans attempt to recapture the glory of their Irda forebears. As the titans increasingly make their influence felt within the ogre nations, rival chieftains compete for the honor of undergoing the transformation ritual. Unrest erupts in Kern, where ogre rebels fight the titans' growing power.

37sc PRELUDE TO SPRING

General Abrena finally falls to an assassin's plot. Sir Morham Targon, a rich and manipulative Knight of the Skull, succeeds her and promises a return to glory for the knighthood. He renames the order the Knights of Neraka and relocates their capital to Jekek, as being more "modern" and "in touch with the times." He orders the knights to lay siege to Sanction.

Palin Majere is kidnapped by the Gray Robes, on orders from Beryl, who believes that Palin knows the reason she and the other wizards are losing their magical powers. Palin is tortured and held for months in a cramped and narrow cell. He is unable to convince them that he knows no more than they do. Finally, they free him on orders from Beryl, who believes that eventually he will supply her with the answer.

37sc A BLEAK WINTER

Beryl orders her minions to attack the Academy of Sorcery in Solace. Dragons set fire to the buildings. Draconians loot the academy, searching for magical artifacts to carry back to Beryl. Mainly due to the heroism of young Ulin Majere, most of the students and masters escaped unharmed. The destruction of the academy, combined with the loss of his magical powers and the terrible torture he underwent bring about a dark change in Palin Majere.

Beryl extends her rule to include Haven. She would like to seize Solace, but she knows that this would involve a pitched battle with the Knights of Solamnia. She fears that such a battle would attract the attention of Malys, who would see this as a violation of the pact between the dragons. Beryl is not ready to challenge Malys, not yet. Beryl closes the roads between Haven and Solace. The city fathers of Solace vote to pay tribute to the dragon, hoping to keep their town safe. This infuriates Caramon Majere, who vows that not one cent of his money will go to the dragon.

The funeral of Tika Waylan Majere, one of the last surviving Heroes of the Lance, draws crowds from all over Ansalon. Caramon Majere is disconsolate, and it is believed that he will not long survive the passing of his beloved wife.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Peter Archer, who filed an on-the-scene report of the dedication ceremony of the Tomb of the Last Heroes in Solace, was born in a log cabin in the north woods of Minnesota, his only companion a giant blue ox named Babe. When he was a mere boy, he fled his small town to escape Injun Joe. He put to sea for several years, pursuing a white whale, then landed on the coast of England, where he was employed at the Admiral Benbow Inn . . . All right, not really. Really he lives in the Pacific Northwest and is the managing editor of *Wizards of the Coast Book Publishing*.

Linda P. Baker, or Lyrallaranasa as she is known on Krynn, used mythological and design elements from many countries—Japan, Java, Hungary, England—to create the puppets of the wild elves. Baker, who lives in Mobile, Alabama with her husband Larry, is the author of *The Irda* and *Tears of the Night Sky*, with Nancy Varian Berberick.

Just returned from a trip to the Forest of Wayreth and a dose of the Master's hospitality at the Tower, Lady Risa Kenellen, or Nancy Varian Berberick according to her professional byline, is settling down and getting back to work. Berberick's *DRAGONLANCE* book, *Tears of the Night Sky* (co-written with Linda Baker) and her next, *Dalamar the Dark*, are in stores now.

Since joining the DL Team Steven Stan! Brown has written *The Bestiary* (from which Caramon's essay on giant slugs and other peculiar creatures of Krynn is "left over"), *Palanthas*, and *Heroes of Sorcery*, co-authored *The Odyssey of Gilthanas* and the *Dragonlance Classics 15th Anniversary Edition*, and added the position of "professional kibitzer" to his resumé. He lives in Renton, Washington.

After working as a newspaper reporter and copy editor, Sue Cook decided she didn't really want to become Lois Lane after all. Instead she joined the book department of TSR, Inc., and went on to become an editor in the company's games division. She has been lead editor and later brand manager for the *DRAGONLANCE* game line and is currently the managing editor of *Amazing Stories®* magazine. For this volume, she penned a thumbnail guide to the Towers of Magic and augmented a time line of Krynn already developed by TSR veteran Douglas Niles. The article previously appeared in the *Dragon Magazine Annual* in 1996. In addition, she researched and described the heretofore little-known saga of the gnome pancake wars.

Jeff Crook's first *DRAGONLANCE* novel, *The Rose and the Skull*, from which Lord Gunthar's Last Will and Testament might be considered an "outtake," hit stores in 1999. He is currently working on another *DRAGONLANCE* novel for the new *Crossroads* series. He has had short stories in *DRAGONLANCE* anthologies, poetry in "The Final Word," and five AD&D adventures in *Dungeon Adventures* magazine. He is currently the editor of *Campaigns*—the newsletter for the Southern Realms region of the RPGA.

John Grubber, who is both Brother Vincent Adibisi and Stefan Tyler, our authorities on dragon anatomy and the Great Library of Palanthas, recently completed a Masters Degree in Religion and Culture at Wilfrid Laurier University, to compliment his previous Anthropology Degree, and hopes to use both to aid in his future writing. When not drawing or writing, he can be found poring through the collections of the Ancient Histories and Faunal Specimens Subdepartments of the Great Library of Palanthas. Besides his pieces about dragon bones and library rules and operations, Grubber also discovered and wrote about the artifacts Eye of Chemosh, the Hand of Habbakkuk and the Cry of Chislev, the Bakali and Ogres.

When not playing computer games with her husband, writing for fun and/or profit, or reading books of all kinds, Miranda Horner edits roleplaying game products for Wizards of the Coast. For this book, she compiled and edited readers' contributions about artifacts, gnome inventions, and kender sayings and did a lot of unsung but appreciated work organizing previously published material about the Khur people from *Heroes of Hope*.

Co-creator of the *DRAGONLANCE* product line, Harold Johnson, has worked on nearly every game line from TSR. Harold contributed the piece on *DRAGONLANCE* chess, as well as the currencies of Krynn and the weather of Krynn with Steve Miller.

Nicole Harsch wrote the music gathered under the pseudonym Jarrus Locastus and created the text for the piece "Armoring the Knights of Takhisia." She has contributed music and writing to previous *DRAGONLANCE* compilations. Nicole and her husband Mike are perhaps best known as The Crossed Swords, a swashbuckling duo who've performed at renaissance festivals and conventions across the country for over 15 years.

Reknowned authority on kender music Darm Windwhistle, otherwise known as Kevin James Kage, aspires to compose a suite for kender orchestra. He resides in various parts of Illinois, where he is infamously known as "the guy in the red hat who sings all the time." His story, "Much Ado About Magic," can be found in the *DRAGONLANCE* anthology, *Heroes and Fools*. He has no cats.

Richard A. Knaak has most recently written *Reavers of the Blood Sea* for the *DRAGONLANCE* series and *Ruby Flame*, the first novel set in the world of the CD-Rom Game Shattered Light. He has written about Kaz and the minotaur race and Kaz's Kazelati ancestors in several best-selling *DRAGONLANCE* novels. He is currently at work on a new novel set in the world of Krynn that has no minotaurs in it . . . honest!

Lady Cordelia, or Mary Krammes, author of "Dress of the Noble Lady in Palanthas," lives in Cincinnati, Ohio with her husband Bob. They are both very active members of the Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA) which recreates the middle ages. She has done much research in costume design, with her favorite time

period being that of the Tudors. Krammes works as an inventory control coordinator for a large industrial plumbing wholesale company.

One of TSR's experts on the coinage and weather of Krynn (among other aspects of the *DRAGONLANCE* world), Steve Miller has been involved with *DRAGONLANCE* since he first joined TSR in 1994. He has contributed to a range of product, including *Citadel of Light*, *Heroes of Defiance*, *Heroes of Hope*, *The Sylvan Veil*, *The Odyssey of Gilthanas* and the *Dragonlance Classics 15th Anniversary Edition*. Steve works as a designer for Wizards of the Coast and lives in Renton, Washington, with a cat named Sargonias.

Kate Novak frittered her adolescence away reading science fiction and writing sappy Star Trek stories. In college she moved on to fantasy and playing the D&D game. She is co-author (with husband Jeff Grubb) of the *Finder's Stone* Trilogy and more recently of *Finder's Bone* and *Tymora's Luck*. She has been involved with helping Tika Waylan Majere create and test recipes for more *DRAGONLANCE* cookbooks than her calorie limit can handle.

One of our contributors of poetry and songs, Nick O'Donohoe writes songs in private, fantasy stories and novels in public. He has written numerous short stories for the *DRAGONLANCE* series. His most recent novel is *The Gnomewrench in the Dwarfworks*, a World War II fantasy set in Rhode Island.

Author, singer, actress, and longtime *DRAGONLANCE* composer Janet Pack's short stories and music can be found in *Dragons of Krynn*, *Dragons of Chaos*, *Dragons at War*, *Relics and Omens*, *Heroes and Fools*, *Leaves from the Inn of the Last Home* and *A History of Dragonlance*. The longtime alter ego of Mitrashar, eleven bard of Qualinesti, Pack sings her original compositions at GEN CON's "Songs of the Saga" Seminar. Pack has also contributed stories to numerous anthologies. Pack juggles part-time jobs with amateur theatricals and lives in the woods around Williams Bay, Wisconsin, with feline companions Tabrika Onyx and Syranis Moonstone.

Don Perrin, known throughout Krynn for his military knowledge and expertise as evidenced by "A Passage from the Great Work of Velna," lives in a barn in Wisconsin with wife, Margaret Weis, three dogs and three cats. Don has completed writing and editing the first player/game master book for the new RPG Sovereign Stone, based on a world created by artist Larry Elmore. Perrin is also manager of the Game Guild, a game/book store located in beautiful downtown Lake Geneva and is producing a line of miniatures for Perrin Miniatures. He is currently working on a new book about his favorite draconian, Kang. Perrin confesses to being currently "hooked" on the Archmage computer game.

Talidus Pralex, a.k.a. Chris Pierson was a *DRAGONLANCE* fan for over a decade before having his first work published in *The History of Dragonlance*. He works as a computer game designer in the Boston area, and has published several *DRAGONLANCE* stories as well as the

novels *Spirit of the Wind* and *Derna's Quest*. He is one of the few people to visit the realm of centaurs and describe their fabled Hyrtamic Games, although in real life his allergy to horses would make a visit to Neothax very uncomfortable.

When Jean Rabe isn't exploring Krynn and writing about its inhabitants, she pretends to garden. In her spare time she enjoys role-playing games and war games and watching her dog swim in her backyard goldfish pond. Jean is the author of *Dawning of a New Age*, *Day of the Tempest* and *Eve of the Maelstrom*. She is presently developing a new *DRAGONLANCE* trilogy starting Dhamion, the hero of those three books. For *More Leaves* she recounted the coming of the great dragons to Krynn.

Paul B. Thompson wrote about the history of catapults and also, under the Krynn de plume of Gaetrun of Solanthus, the acorn and cup divination rituals of the Qué-Shu. Thompson is the author of five *DRAGONLANCE* novels co-written by Tonya Carter Cook—including *Darkness and Light*, *Riverwind the Plainsman*, *Firstborn*, *The Qualinesti* and *The Dargonesti*—as well as the novels *Sundipper*, *Thorn and Needle*, *Red Sands* and the forthcoming *Nemesis*. Thompson and Cook are working on a new trilogy in the *DRAGONLANCE* series about the barbarians. In addition to his novels, short fiction, and articles, Thompson co-edits an offbeat news website, ParaScope (<http://www.parascope.com>). As a boy he made his own black powder rockets and built model catapults out of balsa. Thompson lives in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, with his wife Elizabeth.

Margaret Weis, editor of this and the original *Leaves* way back in 1987, lives in a barn in Wisconsin with husband Don Perrin and three cats and three dogs. She and Tracy Hickman have completed the first book in the War of Souls trilogy, *Dragons of a Fallen Sun*, out in March, 2000. She and Hickman are currently working on the second in the Sovereign Stone series, based on a world created by artist Larry Elmore. The first Sovereign Stone book, *Water from the Well of Darkness*, will be out in Summer 2000. The series is being published by Harper Prism. Weis confesses to being hooked on Pokémon.

Known for his poems in *Chronicles* and *Legends* and also for his novels—among which are *Weasel's Luck* and *Galen Beknighted*—Michael Williams has continued his writing with two novels (*Arctus* and *Allamanda*) published by ROC. He remembers his *DRAGONLANCE* days fondly, but wonders if people will ever stop calling him Quevilan Soth (or Quivalin, or Sath, or whatever).

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